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Information Outlook, July/August 2009

Special Libraries Association

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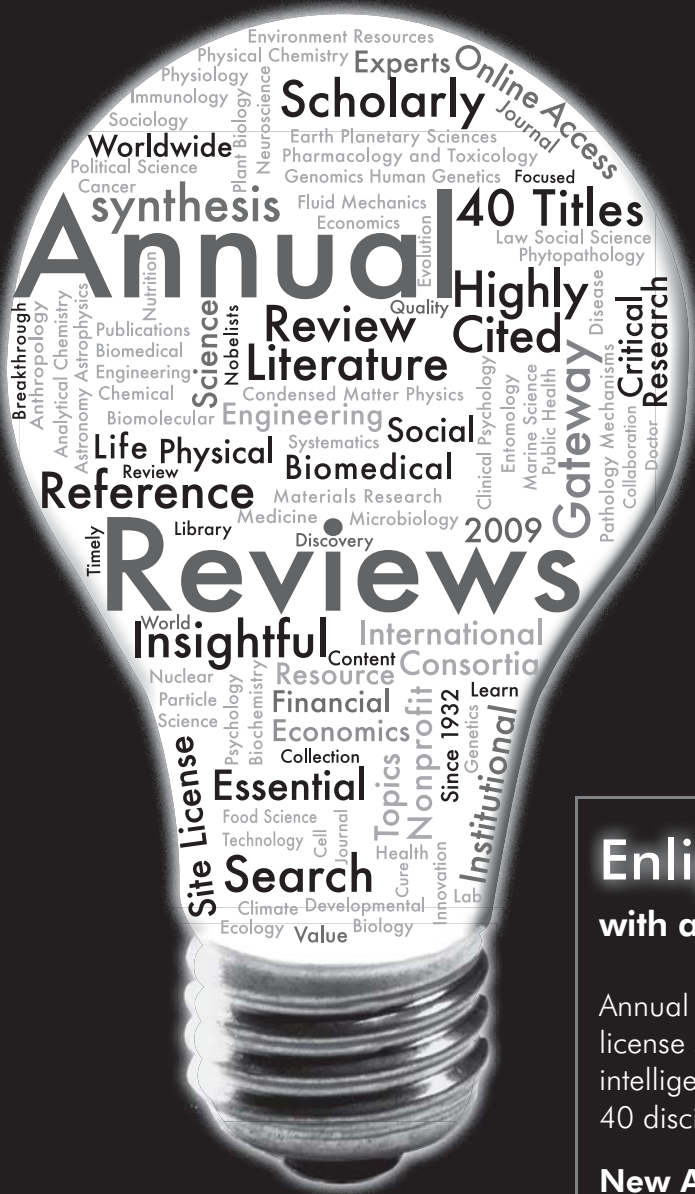
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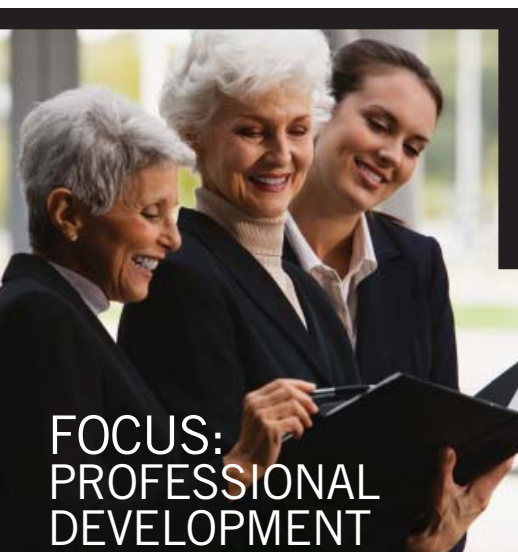
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V 13 | N 05

information outlook

THE MAGAZINE OF THE SPECIAL LIBRARIES ASSOCIATION



FOCUS: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

12 Creating Influence through 'Being There'

ULLA DE STRICKER

18 Getting What You Want to Come to You

MARSHALL BROWN

INFO VIEW

3 Help SLA Build Our Alignment Tribe

GLORIA ZAMORA, SLA PRESIDENT

INSIDE INFO

5 Conference Highlights • Award Winners • and more ...

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

7 Success Stories Could Help Promote Our Value

JIM SCHWARTZ

INFO NEWS

9 Companies Lack Information Strategies • Google Seeks to Address Settlement Concerns • LSU Library School to Merge • and more ...

PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

22 What's in a Name?

MUMTAZ ANWAR

DEMONSTRATING VALUE

28 Supporting the Business Development Unit

ANH HUYNH

2010 BOARD CANDIDATES

32 Meet Your Board Candidates

CONTRIBUTED PAPER

37 Saving Special Libraries in a Recession

ARLENE FLETCHER, MARY FRANKLIN,
JOYCE GARCZYNSKI, GLYNNIS GILBERT,
SARA MATHIS AND PING WANG

INFO SITES

45 Much More than a Magazine Rack

CAROLYN SOSNOWSKI

INFO TECH

47 Committing to Innovation: No Excuses

STEPHEN ABRAM

INFO BUSINESS

49 Developing and Applying Emotional Intelligence

DEBBIE SCHACHTER

INFO MANAGEMENT

51 Finding and Providing Information Aren't Enough

JOHN LATHAM

52 Coming Events Ad Index

information outlook

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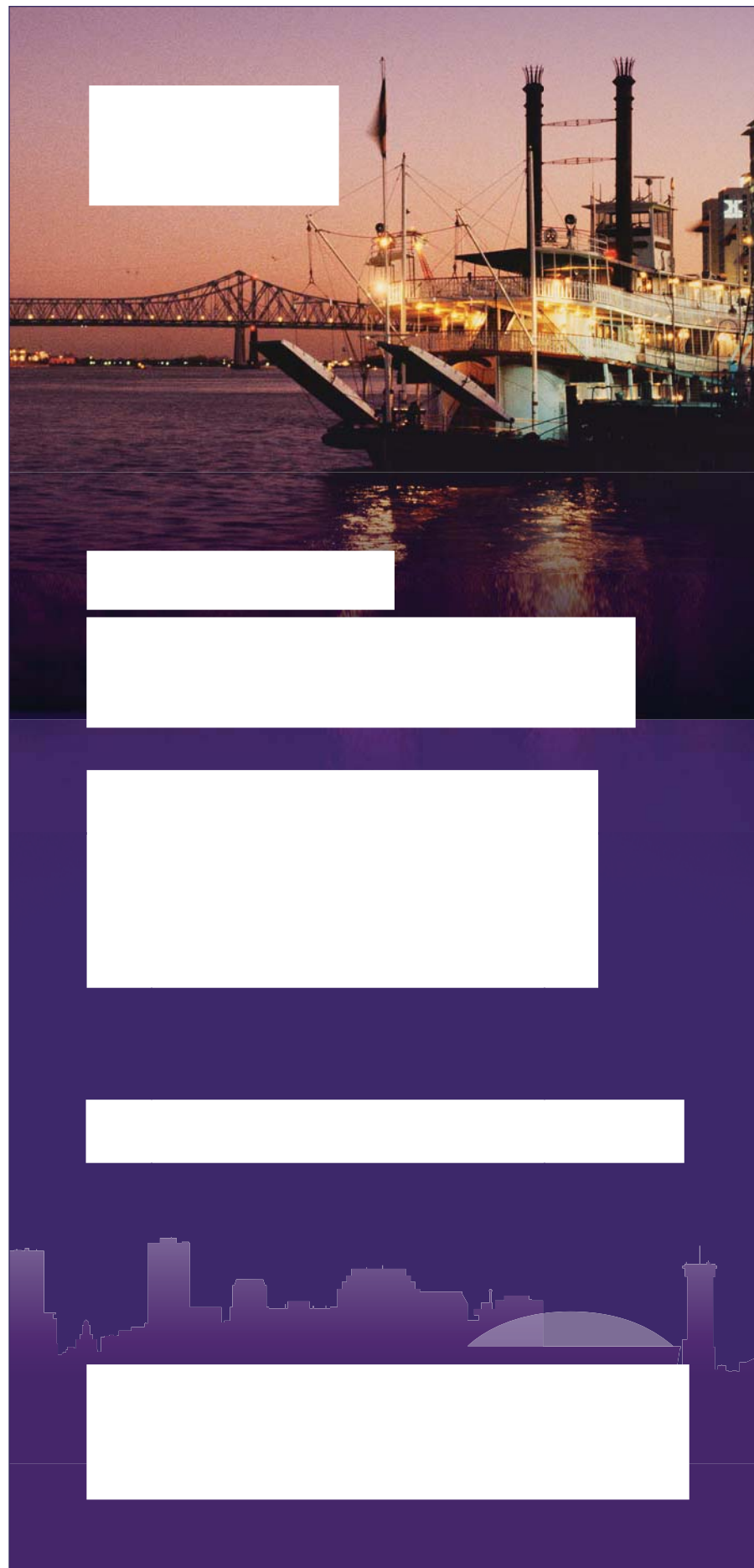
Celebrating 100 Years
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Help SLA Build Our Alignment Tribe

With your help, we can change our association and profession in ways that will benefit all of us for many years to come. Will you join our tribe?

BY GLORIA ZAMORA, SLA PRESIDENT



At our 2008 Annual Conference in Seattle, Seth Godin spoke to us about how to market our ideas and ourselves. He recently published another book, *Tribes*, and as I read it, I realized Seth is talking about the process SLA is going through right now with our alignment project.

Three years ago, SLA took a pivotal step—to look at our profession as a whole, and at SLA specifically, to see if we were suitably placed to move the information profession forward and face the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century. Without consciously realizing it, we were probably undertaking this challenge at the optimal time to review our place in the information profession.

So, where does Seth's notion of a tribe come into play? He describes a tribe as "any group of people, large or small, who are connected to one another, a leader and an idea." We have a connecting idea, the alignment, and we have leaders who are communicating the idea. *We have a tribe!*

For that matter, SLA started out as a tribe. John Cotton Dana and his colleagues were committed to the idea that special librarianship is different from traditional librarianship. Special librarians served specialized information needs in the institutions in which they worked. They were passionate about their profession and the need to establish an organization that focused on their roles as providers of specialized information. They pursued this idea, communicated it clearly and widely, and gained enough support to start SLA. In sum, they worked as a "tribe."

I see the same thing happening with us right now. We are in a situation that is very similar to the one our founders faced: we are ready for change and we have the tools to accomplish the change. I want to incite a movement for change within our profession and association, and with your help I can do it. Together we must build our alignment tribe because, frankly, the old model no longer works.

ment is about growth and success and breaking the old rules and changing the game. In this case, it's also about changing the name. Janice Lachance and I announced at SLA 2009 that we are investigating a new name. We have an obligation to use the alignment research to change our image and promote our abilities. The only thing holding us back is fear. But if we work together and communicate passionately and effectively, how can we fail? We have nothing to fear and everything to gain, and we need your help.

I want a revolution in our thinking. I want to actively take part in something that truly matters. I'm ready to align, and I'm inciting you to action!

Together we must build our alignment tribe because, frankly, the old model no longer works.

How can you contribute to the tribe? Consider what Seth Godin says: "One person with persistent vision can make change happen." You can spread the word about the value of professional societies, the value of the information profession, and the value that each of you brings to the informed decisions made in your library, information center and organization. SLA will give you the tools to empower this alignment movement—the tools to communicate value. Imagine what we can do by working together.

As we build our alignment tribe, we must be prepared to leave behind some of what has defined us in the past. "Growth and success are linked to breaking the old rules," Seth writes in *Tribes*, and the align-

ment is about growth and success and breaking the old rules and changing the game. In this case, it's also about changing the name. Janice Lachance and I announced at SLA 2009 that we are investigating a new name. We have an obligation to use the alignment research to change our image and promote our abilities. The only thing holding us back is fear. But if we work together and communicate passionately and effectively, how can we fail? We have nothing to fear and everything to gain, and we need your help.

Will you join this tribe? Are you willing to be passionate about your commitment to our profession? Are you ready to inspire and initiate change? Do you have a vision? Will you share ours? Will you be part of this tribe? *Will you align in '09?* **SLA**



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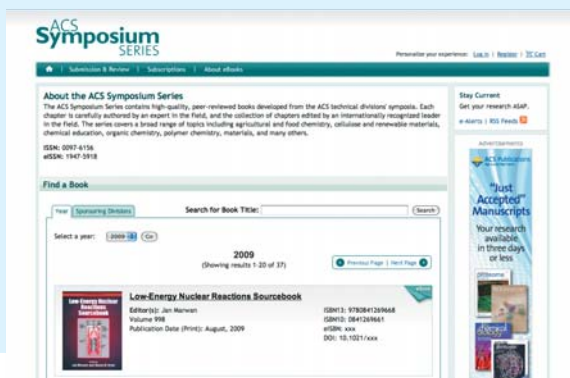
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SLA 2009 Conference Hosts Nearly 6,000 Attendees

The opportunity to learn from experts and network with colleagues trumped concerns about budget cuts and layoffs.

Despite tough economic conditions, sweeping layoffs and shrinking travel and professional development budgets, SLA members turned out in record numbers to participate in the association's 2009 Annual Conference & INFO-EXPO.

Attendance at SLA 2009, held in Washington, D.C., 14-17 June, totaled 5,856 registrants, a 16 percent increase over SLA 2008. Of that number, 1,130 attendees were first-time SLA conference participants.

SLA's INFO-EXPO, the largest information and knowledge management exposition in North America and the most significant gathering of content and technology providers in the world, featured 299 companies and organizations, including 48 first-time exhibitors.

"In a year when so many associations are experiencing dramatic decreases in attendance and exhibit sales, SLA broke records," said SLA Chief Executive Officer Janice Lachance. "SLA's leading-edge conference is clearly a can't-miss networking and professional development event for info pros from around the world, and I am thrilled that so many of them found a way to make it to D.C."

With more than 300 educational sessions, dozens of roundtable discussions and working breakfasts, and scores of receptions and other networking events, SLA 2009 offered attendees plenty of activities from which to choose. Highlights included a keynote presentation from former Secretary of State Colin Powell, an awards reception at the Library of Congress, and a panel discussion about the future of information featuring technology guru John Patrick, astrophysicist Neil deGrasse

Tyson, and author Robyn Meredith.

To view photographs of the conference, visit www.thephotogroup.com, click on "Online Images," and enter access code sla09.

Alignment Research Findings Discussed at Conference

The most talked-about topic during the 2009 Annual Conference & INFO-EXPO was SLA's alignment research, an exhaustive examination of the information profession that is bringing clarity and unity to the core identity and value of the profession and the association. For more than two years, SLA has worked with a multidisciplinary team of research and communication professionals to not only help refine the positioning of the profession in the marketplace, but also to provide a framework for discussing the inherent value in the profession and the association in a clear, compelling and cohesive voice.

SLA Chief Executive Officer Janice Lachance teamed with SLA President Gloria Zamora to deliver a presentation on the alignment research results at the Leadership Development Institute (LDI) on Sunday, 14 June. The volunteer leaders in attendance commented on the findings of the study and asked questions about what the results mean for the future of SLA and the profession.

"Isn't it time for SLA to look at a change in the name of the association?" one attendee asked. Citing the alignment research, which demonstrated that the term "special librarian" holds little or no perceived value to C-level decision

makers and hiring managers, Lachance answered, "Yes, it is clear that the research is telling us that we need to investigate changing the name of SLA."

Information about the alignment process, including highlights of the research findings, is available at www.sla.org/content/sla/alignment/index.cfm.

SLA Honors Best and Brightest in Information Profession

At the SLA 2009 Awards Ceremony and Opening General Session, 18 major awards were presented to leaders within the information profession, including the inaugural class of SLA Rising Stars.

- The **John Cotton Dana Award**, which recognizes a lifetime of achievement as well as exceptional service to special librarianship: Richard Geiger.
- Membership in the **SLA Hall of Fame**, granted to SLA members at or near the end of their professional careers to recognize service and contributions to the association or prolonged distinguished service in an SLA chapter or division that has contributed to the success of the association as a whole: Barbara Semonche and Donna Scheeder.
- The **Rose L. Vornelker Award**, presented to an SLA member in mid-career for exceptional service in mentoring students and/or working professionals: David Shumaker.
- The **Dow Jones Leadership Award**, presented to an SLA member who exemplifies leadership as a special librarian through examples of personal and professional competencies: Barbie Keiser.
- The **Dialog Member Achievement Award**, granted to an SLA member for raising visibility, awareness, and appreciation of the profession, an SLA unit, or the association at large: Janice R. Lachance.
- The **SLA Professional Award** (sponsored by Springer), which recognizes a special event, major achievement

or specific significant contribution from an SLA member to the field of librarianship or information science that advances the association's goals or objectives: Anne Mintz.

- The **J.J. Keller Innovations in Technology Award**, which is granted to an SLA member for the innovative use and application of technology in a special library setting: Diane F. Brenes and the Boeing Library Services Team.

Five SLA members were named **SLA Fellows** in recognition of their leadership as information professionals. Fellowship is bestowed on mid-career SLA members in recognition of past, present and future service to the association and profession.

- Ellie Briscoe
- Stacey Greenwell

- Nancy Minter
- Pam Rollo
- Tony Stankus

Five association members also were named **SLA Rising Stars** in recognition of their exceptional promise of leadership and contributions to the association and profession. SLA Rising Stars have only one to five years of professional experience as a special librarian.

- Michelle Dollinger
- Julie Fleischhacker
- Margaret Ostrander
- Abby Thorne
- Norah Xiao

Videos were created to tell each award recipient's story; the videos are available on SLA-TV, the association's exclusive online video network, at www.slatv.org.

SLA Commemorates Centennial Anniversary

The 2009 Annual Conference & INFO-EXPO included a reception honoring the 100th anniversary of the founding of SLA. The association's official "birthday" is 2 July 1909, the day when John Cotton Dana and F.B. DeBerard called a meeting of 20 librarians on the verandah of the Mt. Washington Hotel in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, to discuss the need for a new type of specialized librarianship and an organization to bring its practitioners together. A century later, SLA is an association of about 11,000 members in 75 countries around the world.

A Web site devoted to the centennial is located at www.sla.org/centennial/. The site includes a timeline of SLA's history, profiles and oral histories of and by members, videos created to honor the centennial, comments about the future of the profession, and lists of centennial events and resources.

Former SLA President Guy St. Clair has written a book, *SLA at 100*, that traces the history of the association and the evolution of its members from workers who provided "practical and utilitarian information" for the business community to experts who today manage enterprise-wide knowledge assets for their parent organizations. The book concludes with an essay on the knowledge culture and posits that SLA members are facing a "critical juncture" that will require them to choose between being "librarians of the past or knowledge services professionals of the future."

To order *SLA at 100*, visit the SLA Marketplace at www.sla.org/merchandise.

SLA 2009 SPONSORSHIPS

More than 15 businesses sponsored products, events and activities at the 2009 Annual Conference and INFO-EXPO. Following is a partial list of sponsorships:

COMPANY NAME	ITEM
CAS	Conference Bags
Champion	Signs
Copyright Clearance Center	Hot Topic Session (split with SIIA), Ice Cream Bar Break, CE Session
Dialog and Proquest	Closing General Session, Hot Topic Session, Member Achievement Award, DLDP Breakfast, INFO-EXPO Guide Member Achievement Award, 23 Things, President's Circle
Dow Jones & Co.	Opening General Session, Tech Zones, Dow Jones Leadership Award, Click U Live CE Courses, Dow Jones Leadership Award, President's Circle, Division Cabinet Meeting
Elsevier	Cyber Connection
Hoovers	"Hoovie" Robot
Inspec	Relaxation Station
J. J. Keller & Associates	2009 Innovations in Technology Award
John Wiley & Sons	SLA Awards and Leadership Reception
LexisNexis	Hot Topic Session, CE Session
SAI Global	VIP Reception
SIIA	Hot Topic Session (split with CCC)
Springer	Hot Topics, Welcome Banner, Water Stations, Marketplace, Professional Development Award, President's Circle, 360 Degree Theater
Thomson Reuters	Wine Bars
Wolters Kluwer Health and Law & Business	Water Stations

SLA Loses Honorary Member and Hall of Fame Member

Barbara Alice Ringer, who was named an honorary member of SLA in 1977 in recognition of the 20-plus years she spent urging Congress to amend U.S. copyright law to give authors greater control over their works, died 9 April at the age of 83.

Ringer was the primary author of the Copyright Act of 1976, which established the principle of "fair use" that

allows scholars and reviewers to quote briefly from copyrighted works without having to pay fees. The act also extended copyright protection to authors for the remainder of their lifetimes plus 50 years. Under the previous law, an author owned the copyright for 28 years from the date of publication; if the copyright was not renewed, the work entered the public domain and the author lost all rights to royalties.

In 1971, Ringer filed a discrimination suit after being passed over for the job of register of copyrights, the nation's top copyright position. A federal hearing examiner found "a consistent pattern of discrimination" and concluded that Ringer had been wrongfully denied the position because she was a woman and because she was a vocal proponent of promoting black employees at the library. In 1973, a federal judge ordered that Ringer be installed as the register of copyrights, making her the first woman to hold the job.

Paul Wasserman, professor emeritus and founding dean of the College of Information Studies at the University of Maryland and 2007 inductee into the SLA Hall of Fame, died 8 May at the age of 85.

Wasserman took up the post of dean of the School of Library and Information Services, University of Maryland, in January 1965, shortly after the school was formally approved. He built the new school to be interdisciplinary, recruiting an engineer, a physicist, and an industrial psychologist, among others, to be the first faculty. He led the design of the doctoral program, which admitted its first students in 1967, before leaving the deanship in 1970 and returning to a full-time faculty position.

Wasserman was well known for his contributions to library administration. He lectured and consulted internationally, frequently working on programs to educate library administrators in developing countries. With his colleague Mary Lee Bundy he edited *Reader in Library Administration*. He taught his course on the design of information products and services until 2005. **SLA**



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

SUCCESS STORIES COULD HELP PROMOTE OUR VALUE

At a time of widespread layoffs, high unemployment, frozen and reduced salaries, and even bankruptcies, it would be appropriate for SLA to conduct an employment survey of its members.

Many information professionals have been adversely affected by the economic downturn. They have lost jobs not only at businesses that have not survived (such as newspapers) but also at businesses that have announced reorganizations and mergers (such as pharmaceutical companies). An employment survey would reveal how these information professionals are faring—whether they are having difficulty finding open positions, are seldom being called for interviews, or are being offered lower-than-expected salaries.

If so, SLA can use its resources to learn why organizations are reluctant to hire information professionals. There may be many reasons—employers may be waiting for the downturn to end before hiring workers, or they may not fully understand the benefits of having information professionals on their staff, or they may simply regard information professionals as overhead employees who can be hired or fired depending on the profitability of their business.

SLA can also develop programs that promote the competencies and value of information specialists. One idea would be to develop a package of success stories that show how information professionals have helped organizations create products, obtain patents, identify new markets, and attract new customers.

For example, it would be helpful to solicit success stories from information professionals who have worked with engineers who develop hybrid vehicles and solar technology products. Similar stories from information professionals who have supported the efforts of scientists working on new treatments for diabetes and cancer would also be of considerable interest. These stories could be published in trade journals and business periodicals, presented at various conferences, and shared at joint meetings of business executives and information professionals.

*Jim Schwartz
North State Environmental
schwartzjim@hotmail.com*

To share your views about an article or column in *Information Outlook*, contact editor@sla.org. Letters should run no longer than 500 words.

VOTE FOR THE FUTURE! 2010 SLA BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTION

Electronic Voting begins
9 September 2009 at 12:01 a.m. EDT

All members* eligible to vote and in good standing as of 24 August 2009 may participate in the election. Polls will close on 1 October at 5:00 p.m. EDT.

For complete details and information about the candidates visit www.sla.org/BODElection.



SLA 2010

Businesses Want Good Information, But Lack Strategy to Manage and Retrieve It

Many organizations are in danger of being overwhelmed by the sheer volume of information and their inability to organize and prioritize it.

Companies rate information as their highest business priority this year, but fewer than half of business decision makers have a high confidence level in the quality and accessibility of information within their organizations, and roughly 40 percent lack both the in-house expertise and a strategy to manage it.

Surveys of business and technology executives in the United States, England, Australia and Singapore revealed that organizations realize that getting the right information at the right time is critical to their business success, but often find it difficult to justify investing in information-related projects. When asked which “information-centric” projects they would fund during the next two years, respondents said document work flow transformation, records management and e-discovery/compliance.

Typical e-discovery requirements involve producing specific business information based on requested dates and subject matter. More than 40 percent of companies said their main concern regarding e-discovery was the risk—both legal and financial—of failing to produce documents in a timely manner. However, companies are still struggling with this issue because they don’t understand the requirements for responding to e-discovery requests and lack funding for the technology to support finding the information they need.

As much as 80 percent of the content within organizations today is “unstructured,” meaning it is not held within a database. This unstructured information is often subject to e-discovery

requests under the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.

Hewlett Packard, which sponsored the surveys, recommends that businesses adopt an information management strategy consisting of eight steps, including the following:

1. Obtain senior executive sponsorship and cross-organizational involvement;
2. Leverage information management best practices from records managers, archivists, and librarians; and
3. Prove business value by measuring accomplishments and communicating them in business terms.

For more information, visit www.hp.com/go/imhub.

Google Seeks to Address Concerns about Book Settlement

Representatives of Google have been meeting with SLA members and staff and with other library groups to answer questions and address concerns about the proposed book search settlement, which is still pending approval by the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York.

In May, Derek Slater, a policy analyst with Google, met with staff at SLA headquarters to discuss and address various concerns that have been voiced by SLA members over the settlement. Though many issues were discussed, the conversation focused on four primary areas: institutional subscription pricing, privacy, intellectual freedom, and orphan works (works that are out of print and unclaimed by any copyright holders). Slater said then, and reiterat-

ed in comments posted on SLA’s Public Policy blog in June, that it will remain one of Google’s priorities to work to pass effective orphan works legislation.

On 16 June, at the Public Policy Update session at SLA 2009, Dan Clancy, engineering director at Google Book Search, provided an overview of the scope of the settlement agreement and addressed various concerns and questions from audience members.

Under the proposed settlement, the Association of American Publishers and the Authors Guild agreed to drop their legal dispute with Google over the scanning of millions of books provided by research libraries. The Authors Guild had been concerned because the settlement lets Google use orphan works without first getting approval from their authors. Authors Guild officials say that because the settlement requires Google to set aside funds for authors of orphan books, the number of such books will diminish over time as rights holders come forward to claim money.

Although the settlement could expand individuals’ and groups’ access to books, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) recently opened a formal investigation into the settlement over digital publishing rights and the possibility that the agreement could violate the Sherman Antitrust Act. The concern is that Google, having digitized millions of books, would have a monopoly on them should the judge approve the settlement. Library groups, meanwhile, are worried that the absence of competition for the new services could compromise fundamental library values such as equal access to information.

Should the settlement be approved by the court and pass muster with the DOJ, it will still face government scrutiny. The European Commission has announced plans to study the settlement agreement to review how the settlement with authors in the United States affects writers’ rights in the EU.

LSU Library School to Merge with Education, Social Work Schools

The School of Library and Information Science at Louisiana State University will be incorporated into a new entity, the School of Social and Educational Professions (SEP), under a proposed realignment plan submitted by the university's chancellor.

"The fragmented and confusing arrangement of some academic units impedes our efforts in some critical areas ... to mount the best programs of instruction, leverage external funding for research and scholarship, and discharge our land-grant mission as an indispensable resource for the state of Louisiana," wrote Chancellor Michael V. Martin in a letter dated 5 May. "The realignment will achieve a number of objectives designed to increase effectiveness, efficiency, clarity and accountability while preserving current admission and degree requirements and our obligation to students."

Under the realignment plan, the School of Library and Information Science will combine with the College of Education, the School of Social Work, the School of Human Resource Education and Workforce Development, and the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders to form SEP. A new entity, the Department of Family and Child Studies, will also be created within SEP by moving faculty from the School of Human Ecology.

The changes at LSU mark the second time this year that a library school has had its identity subsumed. Earlier this year, the Board of Governors of Rutgers University (New Jersey) approved a resolution to change the name of the School of Communication, Information and Library Studies to the School of Communication and Information. In recent years, library schools at Columbia University, Emory University, the University of Minnesota, Vanderbilt, and many other institutions of higher

learning have closed their doors, leaving fewer than 60 such schools in the United States.

Most Information Services Work Being Performed In-house

Organizations that are outsourcing information services responsibilities to third parties say they are pleased with the quality and cost-effectiveness of the work being performed, while organizations that aren't outsourcing say they don't do so because of their concerns about those same factors.

A survey of 71 leaders of information services units in U.S. businesses found that more than half of them are outsourcing at least some of their information services tasks, especially generalist and specialist research services. Even among organizations that are outsourcing, however, the majority of the work continues to be performed in-house, particularly on presentations and legal support.

information outlook

Online

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The practice of outsourcing information services has become more popular in recent years as businesses have sought ways to reduce their expenses. To gain an understanding of how information professionals perceive the practice, FreePint, a publisher of resources for the business information industry, and Integreon, a provider of outsourcing services, conducted an anonymous survey of information professionals across a range of industries to learn their practices and perceptions.

The survey found that the use of outsourcing is on the rise but that it has not kept pace with the decline in the global economy. Some analysts believe businesses are focusing on traditional cost-saving measures, such as cutting travel expenses and reducing or eliminating bonuses, in hopes that the economy will rebound. If these approaches do not work, outsourcing is likely to become more prevalent.

San Jose State Makes Master's Degree Available Online

The San Jose School of Library and Information Science, the world's largest accredited LIS program, will complete the transition to full online delivery of its 43-credit master of library and information science (MLIS) degree by the time students enroll for the fall 2009 semester.

With the transition, the school will change its name to the Global e-Campus for Library and Information Science to reflect its virtual nature and reach. The school's 2,800 graduate students live in 45 states and 14 countries, and its full- and part-time faculty reside on three continents.

San Jose's investment in information and communications technologies and commitment to distance learning allow students to choose from more than 250 online courses each semester and interact with peers and instructors through Web conferencing, social networking platforms, a Web-based learning management system, and immersive environments. By using these technologies

to earn their degrees, students are better prepared to apply them to their professional lives.

For more information, visit <http://slisweb.sjsu.edu>.

University to Merge Publishing Operations with Library

University of Michigan officials have announced plans to merge the University of Michigan Press with the university's library to allow the press to better serve some of its main clients, including the School of Information, the School of Art and Design, and the College of Literature, Science and the Arts.

The announcement came approximately one month after the Association of American Universities and the Association of Research Libraries issued a statement urging universities to take a more active role in producing and sharing academic works through digital technologies.

The University of Michigan Press will now digitize scholarly books and only print them after an order has been placed. In the past, the press printed a certain number of copies of a book and stored the copies in a warehouse until orders were placed. Under the new model, the press will be able to avoid printing more copies than necessary and will also reduce physical storage costs.

Books published for the general reader, including books about the Great Lakes and issues of public concern like personal health or poverty, will continue to be published under the current model.

Michigan officials say the move to digitize academic works will give the University of Michigan Press more flexibility in financing projects. Rather than each publishing project being required to show a profit, the University of Michigan Press will need to be profitable overall. **SLA**

Info File

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Creating Influence through *'Being There'*

BY ASKING FOR HELP AND OFFERING IT TO OTHERS, YOU CAN ADVANCE NOT ONLY YOUR CAREER BUT ALSO THE CAREERS OF OTHERS AND THE PROFILE OF THE INFORMATION PROFESSION.

BY ULLA DE STRICKER

“We all need somebody to lean on ...” When Bill Withers wrote these words for his hit song “Lean on Me” (readers too young to have heard it when it was on the charts may enjoy it online), he was onto something: The people we lean on—that is, whose help we seek out and whose opinions we trust—often end up exercising influence, even though influence may not be on their minds.

Achieving a reputation as being someone who carries our profession forward through influence does not require performing spectacular acts or taking heroic measures. All it takes is the determination to “be there” for col-

leagues, business connections, stakeholders, and so on.

We can each develop such a reputation by constantly asking ourselves two questions: Am I leaning whenever possible on my colleagues to grow as a professional? Am I likewise offering others the opportunity to lean on me?

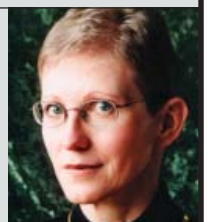
Social Capital: A Key Element

One key ingredient in developing and exerting influence is social capital. Social capital is variously defined as some combination of credibility, popularity and respect—for example, the credibility you have as an expert, the popularity you enjoy as a successful relation-

ship manager, and the respect others have for your opinions, expertise, and contribution. People with social capital “matter”—not through rank or title but through the earned admiration of others. Thus, a person in an entry-level position may be an influencer because he or she has garnered a reputation as an expert, spearheaded a popular and successful initiative that was not necessarily in his or her portfolio, or shown in some other way the ability and willingness to make something positive happen. Having social capital means others will go out of their way to support you and will forgive minor flaws if necessary.

On a personal note, I believe I built social capital in my early years when,

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Achieving a reputation as being someone who carries our profession forward through influence does not require spectacular acts or various forms of heroic measures. All it takes is the determination to “be there” for colleagues, business connections, stakeholders, and so on.

during my business travels, I volunteered to speak to local professional groups and when, year in and year out, I assisted students and colleagues with preparing their resumes. I hope I’m still building it when I hold various roles in SLA and when I engage with individuals who approach me for collegial input. From that bank account of contributions, I have developed (so I’m told) a reputation as someone who can be counted on to help.

I use my social capital to connect people who may benefit from finding each other, to ask for help when I need it, and, in general, to navigate within the profession with a view to assisting our future influencers. And what have I discovered? Social capital appears to be inexhaustible and self-renewing. What a deal!

What is Influence?

How do information professionals who are considered influential define their influence? Following are some examples of how influence plays out, according to those who have led influential careers.

First, influencers look beyond the status quo and, notably, have a better proposal up their sleeves. For instance, they reach out to IT personnel and work hard with them to deploy the latest and most powerful desktop tools for the benefit of clients. They are always on the prowl for new or better ways to enable their clients to help themselves where appropriate (this includes making sure clients know the “value tricks” of the new tools).

Influencers also look for ways to contribute their skills and experience throughout their careers, in any and all ways that may be opportune. Exercising influence can

be as unobtrusive as developing a reputation as a go-to expert or quietly nurturing relationships, or it can be as noticeable as campaigning intensely for an initiative or getting others excited about a vision. Authoring blogs, offering to speak and teach at local events, and writing book reviews for the local chapter bulletin are all examples of quiet but effective ways to exert influence.

Taking a stand confidently and refusing to bend in the face of criticism or opposition are marks of influencers. So, too, are expressions of the trust others put in us, such as when they request we manage a project or elect us to a role in an association or volunteer group.

Some aspects of influence have characteristics in common with trailblazing (being the first to propose, adopt or do something) and with entrepreneurship (“just doing it” without any safety net). As a personal example, I was not thinking about exerting influence when, years ago, I convinced a manager of the need for a program at a local educational institution and then created such a program. I did it because I thought it needed doing.

Gaining Influence When New

These traits or characteristics of influence are helpful in defining what it is and how it works, but how can new information professionals acquire influence? To point the way for new professionals to become influential, I have compiled some advice.

One approach is to contribute actively and frequently to the body of knowledge our profession possesses. Share your discoveries, experiences and opinions through a Web site, blogs, or formal publications and add to the universe of

our discoverable knowledge.

Another approach is to look for relevant value in, and borrow and adapt ideas from, other professions (such as management, accounting or journalism) to enrich our own scope of activity. Take the business approach to decision making—step back from the view that “librarianship as we define it through our many services is inherently valuable” and adopt the view that “clients will pay if they perceive a value to themselves.” Recognize and appreciate the fact that if you cannot make a business case to a decision maker, your project will not advance.

Work constantly to strengthen networks among practitioners so as to expand the opportunities for individuals to lean on each other. Use your existing contacts (“I’ll have Pat get in touch with you”) and seek out new ones. Always ask yourself, “Who else should be part of this conversation?”

Something Valuable to Offer

Information professionals historically have not been regarded as take-charge types but rather as steadfast supporters of the missions of their employing organizations. The influencers among us are an exception—they strive to gain visibility for, and increase understanding of, our profession.

Influencers seek out opportunities to generate media coverage, such as by accepting speaking engagements. Influence means reaching out to, and starting dialogues with, representatives from other professional groups to exchange insights and ideas for the benefit of all (expanding job opportunities would be one such benefit).

Influencers also demonstrate that



they are able to achieve goals for their organizations by going beyond providing excellent and responsive service. They seek out opportunities to forge cross-departmental relationships, bring the right people to the project table, and spearhead business initiatives.

Hmm, you might think, that's all well and good for the extroverted personalities, but I'm really not comfortable sticking my neck out. Above all, I don't want anyone to wonder, "Who does she think she is?"

In my view, *every* information professional has something valuable to offer fellow practitioners, clients, the local or practice community, and society in general. If you aren't sure what that something is in your case, you could gain more clarity by finishing statements such as these:

- Actually, I'm pretty decent at ____.
- Given my involvement in ____, I know a lot about ____.
- My work on the ____ board of directors has taught me how to ____.
- Since I've been helping out with ____, I could do something similar for ____.

- I organized the events for ____, so I could be on the program committee for ____.
- I enjoy tinkering with ____, and I could show others how these things work by doing ____.

The goal is to identify something you enjoy doing and feel secure about, then transpose it onto the activities of a professional association or interest group. If you are still in doubt, do what I always tell resume writers to do: Ask a few trusted colleagues what they see as your professional and personal strengths. You may be surprised, but go with what you hear!

Seeing Yourself as Influential

In my volunteer work with students and colleagues, I have come across examples of staggering humility. "Nine years of managing a business—is that relevant in my application?" "What, experience as a hospitality manager should go on my resume?" (These examples are made up, but reflect

what I have heard.) I quickly explain how almost any life or work experience can contribute to painting a picture of a desirable hire.

Similarly, I see evidence that current and future influencers in our profession may not self-identify as such. My reaction is that we need to define for ourselves a goal-accomplishing orientation so as to foster a sense of being able to achieve more. The overarching goal I'm thinking about here is to help the profession grow in strength and thereby generate more opportunities for info pros to have a positive impact on society.

Using SLA to illustrate this process, here are some questions we can each ask ourselves:

- Am I volunteering to support an event in any way? (Taking registrations or organizing a venue are common examples.)
- Do I serve on a committee?
- Do I respond to requests for assistance from another group member by following through until the desired results are on track?

- When I come across an item of interest I feel could be missed by colleagues, do I pass it on?
- Do I participate in and contribute ideas, materials, and resources to discussion groups?

If you answer “yes” to these questions, you are contributing to forming and maintaining an environment in which our professional contributions to society can evolve.

SLA and its subgroups—indeed, all professional bodies—offer participants the opportunity to accomplish one goal, then another, and so on along the path to what some see as “senior” influence. The truth is that achieving “senior” influence results from exercising influence all along the way, starting with, say, being a student SLA liaison at library school. The trick is to go from student rep to local chapter committee member to division committee member and so on. The sequence is unimportant; the participation is all-important.

Influencing Your Way

Now let’s go back to the Bill Withers song. First, lean on others—then be someone others can lean on.

SLA offers many opportunities for the information profession’s incipient influencers to find their way and flourish. As SLA celebrates a century of activity and looks to the future, I am eager to see how we as a community continue to demonstrate the results of our commitment to support each other. The steps in the process are simple enough.

May I Lean on You? First, know your strengths and weaknesses and especially the areas in which you need to lean on others. Do you need help getting over a fear of public speaking? Are you struggling to develop a business proposal or wondering how to live up to the particular expectations of a new job?

Next, use the SLA network to seek out help. A simple “Do you know someone who can...” typically yields contacts in no time.

Overcome any hesitation you may have about asking for help. Just do it. Asking for guidance is not an admission



People with social capital “matter” —not through rank or title but through the earned admiration of others.

of inadequacy—on the contrary, it shows judgment and initiative. You’d be amazed how many of your fellow practitioners are grateful to have a chance to provide the same help they once received.

Finally, be specific in your request. State the situation you are facing and the outcome you’d like to see, but leave the specific nature of the help you seek open for discussion. “I need to make a presentation next month to the budget committee and I’m not experienced at crafting a compelling story. Can you help?” is better than “Can I talk to you about presentations?” because your colleague can decide right away whether to continue talking or refer you to someone else who is in a better position to assist.

Lean on Me. Once you feel comfortable, stand up and make it clear to fellow practitioners and especially to students that you are available and delighted to provide collegial support. Remember that many people who could benefit from your expertise may have no way of knowing you are willing to offer it,

so advertise it through the many communication vehicles within your SLA chapter and division and through your local and personal networks.

Share your expertise with others by writing, blogging, speaking, teaching, and being a sounding board. Offering to deliver talks and presentations at professional events is a good way to make it possible for colleagues to benefit from what you know.

Propose and promote programs and initiatives to add to the opportunities for professional growth. Make it a personal priority to undertake actions and accept formal professional roles that are “above and beyond” the call of duty. You can do it because you have others to lean on.

Whenever you assist a colleague, request that he or she share that fact with others so as to get the word out. Don’t forget how good it looks on your resume when you are able to recite your contributions. **SLA**

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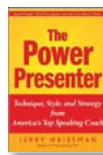
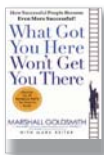
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Getting What You Want to Come to You

KNOWING WHAT YOU WANT AND COMMITTING YOURSELF TO OBTAINING IT ARE FUNDAMENTAL TO ACHIEVING SUCCESS IN YOUR CAREER AND PERSONAL LIFE.

BY MARSHALL BROWN

Paul is one of those people at work you just love to hate—but can't, really, because he's so darned nice. Things seem to go so easily for him. He lands contracts, the head of the company pops in with interesting projects, and customers call him with huge orders. It's as if he's just kicking back on an inner tube and being carried along on a current of good luck.

Contrast that with Sean, who puts in long, hard hours every day, plus more on weekends. He exerts tremendous effort with every deal he puts together and every project he takes on, yet he rarely achieves exactly what he's striving so hard to create. Rather than

floating down a river, Sean feels like he's slogging through mud.

What's the difference? On the outside, things look relatively equal. Both men have master's degrees from well-respected universities. They're both competent and well-liked by co-workers and those they supervise.

Hint: It's in the river image. When Paul works hard, it doesn't feel like a struggle—he's "in the flow." He's in tune with his life purpose, his passions, and his vision for himself and the work he does in the world. As a consequence, he's just naturally able to attract what he wants, with enviable ease.

Ingredients of Attraction

The law of attraction isn't just some woo-woo theory, it's scientific. Matter attracts like matter. It's similar to a radio broadcast—when a radio is tuned to a particular station, you will only hear (attract) the frequency of radio waves that match that station's signal. When it happens, everything seems easy, like it does for Paul.

"Once you change the way you are inside, the outer world changes," writes Joe Vitale, author of the recent best seller, *The Attractor Factor*. Vitale is one of dozens of authors who write persuasively on this seemingly mysterious subject. Call it synchronicity, coincidence, chance or what have you, attraction is a phenomenon that, as author Julia

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Cameron puts it, some of us might prefer to ignore: the possibility of an intelligent and responsive universe, acting and reacting in our interests.

Following are some of the key ingredients for attracting what you want into your life and work.

Get clear about what you want and why you want it. It's not enough to know what you don't want. You can't get what you want until you know what that is.

Napoleon Hill, whose classic *Think and Grow Rich* has inspired several generations, wrote that a burning desire is essential to personal success. What was true in 1937 during the Great Depression, when Hill wrote the book, is just as true now: "There is one quality which one must possess to win, and that is definiteness of purpose—the knowledge of what one wants and a burning desire to possess it."

What do you want? A job with flex time

so that you can go to your daughter's soccer games? The financial freedom to be able to take on a pro-bono case for a nonprofit client? The opportunity to indulge your passion for chocolate (and inflame others with it) by opening a chocolate café downtown?

Many of us have forgotten how to dream. We've become more connected to our to-do lists than to what we really want. But becoming crystal clear about what you want and why you want it is where the "magic" of attraction all begins. When you know the "what," the "how" can begin to fall into place.

Imagine it. Act as if what you want to happen is already happening and see how that changes your thoughts.

"Conscious change is brought about by the two qualities inherent in consciousness: attention and intention," writes Deepak Chopra in *The Seven Spiritual Laws of Success*. "Attention energizes, and intention transforms.

Whatever you put your attention on will grow stronger in your life."

Commit. A quotation often attributed to Goethe but actually written by W. H. Murray in his 1951 book *The Scottish Himalayan Expedition* speaks eloquently to the power of commitment. "Until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back, always ineffectiveness," Murray wrote. "Concerning all acts of initiative (and creation), there is one elementary truth the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans: that the moment one definitely commits oneself, then providence moves, too. A whole stream of events issues from the decision, raising in one's favor all manner of unforeseen incidents, meetings and material assistance, which no man could have dreamt would have come his way."

Commitment, by its very nature, implies choice. And choosing something means not choosing something else, a



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Becoming crystal clear about what you want and why you want it is where the “magic” of attraction all begins.

prospect that some of us find daunting. But keeping all our options open too often results in making no choice at all—the death knell of dreams.

Keep yourself receptive. Exercise, eat healthily, play, and relax. Stress, exhaustion and sluggishness can all interfere with attraction. In the radio station analogy, they become the “static” that interferes with the “frequencies” of that which you want to attract.

Although taking a day off to relax rather than working frantically may seem as difficult as stepping off a precipice, it can be just what is needed. As novelist Toni Morrison told *Newsweek* in a 1981 interview, “We are traditionally rather proud of ourselves for having slipped creative work in there between the domestic chores and obligations. I’m not sure we deserve such big A-pluses for that.”

When we’re too busy with all of our daily “to-dos,” we effectively tune out and turn off the frequency that broadcasts inspirations and hunches and new ideas. As economist Paul Hawken says, “Always leave enough time in your life to do something that makes you happy, satisfied, and even joyous. That has more of an effect on economic well-being than any other single factor.”

Listen to your intuitive nudges. Attraction isn’t about sitting back and waiting for it all to come to you. Action is always required to meet goals and make dreams come true.

“Your job,” Vitale writes, “is to ask for what you want and then to act on the inner nudges you get to do things, like make phone calls, write letters, visit a certain person, or whatever.” Don’t worry if your “nudges” don’t make immediate sense. The “why” will reveal itself later.

Change your thoughts. Consider the possibility that you can change things by simply changing the way you see them.

The axiom that Wayne Dyer uses daily to remind himself of this truth goes like this: Change the way you look at things, and the things you look at change.

In his book *The Power of Intention*, Dyer recommends a 10-step program for attracting what you want. His steps include the following:

1. See the world as an abundant, providing, friendly place;
2. Affirm that you attract success because that is who you are;
3. Remember that your prosperity and success will benefit others;
4. Monitor your emotions as a guidance system for when you are connected to the energetic “flow” that happens when you are in sync with inspiration; and
5. Be grateful and filled with awe for all that manifests into your life.

Surrender control. Detach from the outcome. This means to let go and trust. Let go of the particular way in which things will happen. Let go of fear, doubt, worry and disappointment.

Let go of the notion of struggle. Like Paul, when you’re working hard at something you love, it doesn’t feel like a struggle.

Counting on Lucky Breaks

Julia Cameron, whose book *The Artist’s Way* has helped countless people attract and successfully live the creative life they desire, calls the notion of struggle “rubbish.” She contends that we can count on so-called lucky breaks, what Joseph Campbell called “a thousand unseen helping hands.”

“We like to pretend it is hard to follow our heart’s dreams,” Cameron writes. “The truth is, it is difficult to avoid walking through the many doors that will open. Turn aside your dream and it will come back to you again. Get willing to follow it again and a second mysterious

door will swing open. Take a small step in the direction of a dream and watch the synchronous doors flying open.”

So, whether your dream is getting a promotion, landing a huge client or buying a new house, claim it. It’s yours if you want it. **SLA**

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What's In a Name?

THE TERM WE USE TO DESCRIBE OURSELVES AND OUR COLLEAGUES SHOULD CONVEY THE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ATTITUDES REQUIRED TO PERFORM OUR JOBS. 'INFORMATION MANAGER' SEEMS TO MEET THESE CRITERIA.

BY MUMTAZ A. ANWAR, PHD

What's in a name? We rarely think how much meaning names have in our lives. Names are powerful symbols that distinguish one referent from another. They contain vibrant energy (either positive or negative) that affects our social space as well as our psyche. Once you start seriously thinking about them, you begin to understand the implications of their power.

Ever since 1968, when I first met some Arab friends in the United States and, later, many more while living in Arab countries, I have gotten used to receiving a surprising look whenever I am introduced by name to another Arab person. Mumtaz happens to mean

"excellent," and it seems some people are uncertain whether my name really fits my personality. I meet the situation in a light mood, saying that I am not responsible for my name—it was my mother's choice.

The point is that you will find mismatches all around you. Don't be surprised if you meet a Mr. Ibn Battah (meaning "son of a duck") who is slim and quite tall, or a Mr. Kutubkhanah (meaning "library") who has never read a book. You can find similar, or more striking, examples in every culture.

Let me move away from personal names to a source of folk wisdom—the stories of Mulla Nasruddin, the funny Turk, known as Juha in the Arab world. The Mulla was sitting one day outside

his house, dressed in his best clothes, with a huge turban on his head. A turban in those times was a symbol of scholarship. A lady walked up to him and asked him to read for her a letter she had received from a relative living in a far-off land. The Mulla, looking at the paper, told her that it was written in a language he did not know.

"You have this big turban over your head and yet you don't know the language?" the lady remarked. The Mulla, a little annoyed, took off the turban, placed it on the lady's head, and said, "Now you have the turban, you read it."

This amusing situation was created by a mismatch between the symbol and the referent. The social reality is that symbols are very powerful, and

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if there is a mismatch between them and their referents, they cause anxiety and dissatisfaction.

Identifying the Discipline

What do symbols have to do with libraries and librarians? Please keep in mind these words: library, economy, service and school.

In 1879, Melvil Dewey, who was a prolific creator, presented his idea for a “Librarians’ College” to the American Libraries Association conference. Dewey’s plan was approved in spite of vigorous protests by some members present (Kindlin and Engle 1975). But in 1887, when the college opened at Columbia University, it was named the School of Library Economy.

Did Dewey change the name himself, or was it the result of academic naming practices at Columbia? We do

not know for sure, although the word “economy” was indicative of a practice or occupation rather than scholarship. It is interesting to note that the ALA, at its 1908 conference, adopted a recommendation to publish a textbook to be called the *Manual of Library Economy*, which began publication in 1911 and was completed in 1929 (Kaser 1992).

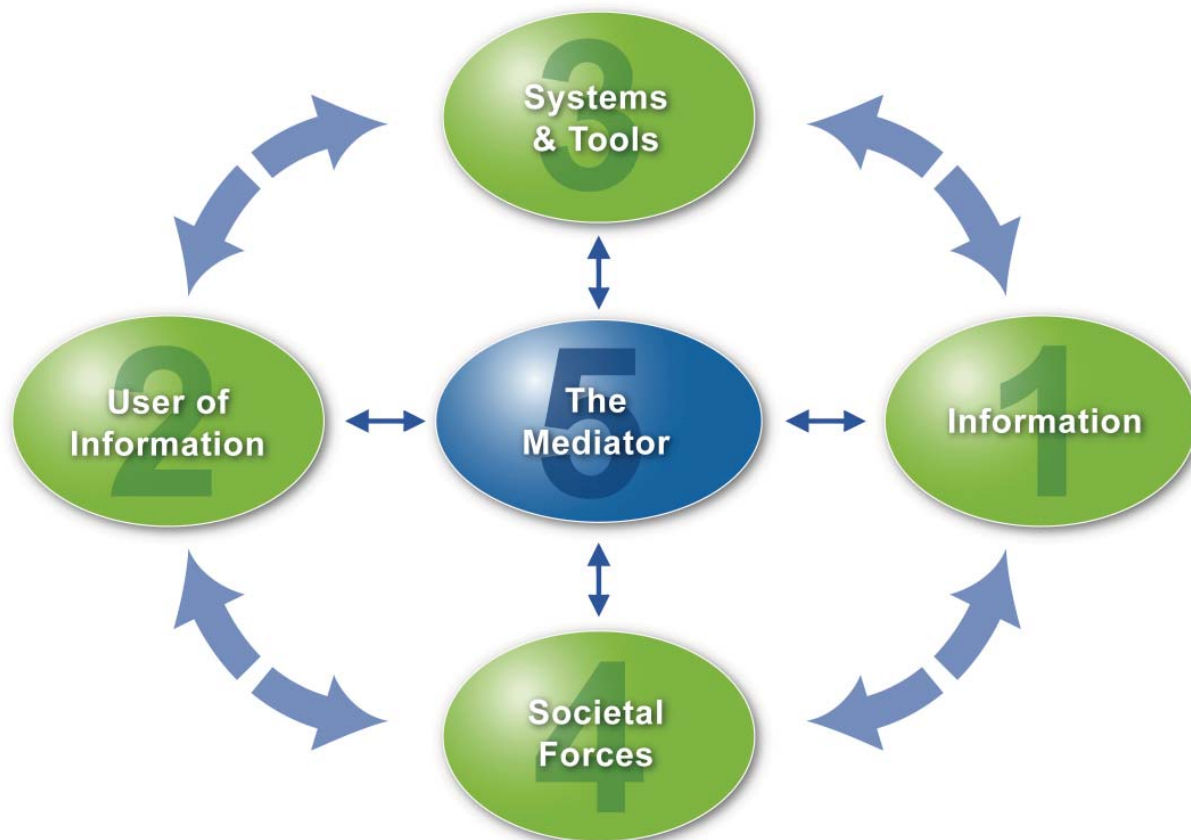
Sometime around the beginning of the 20th century, the term “library economy” was replaced by “library science.” The shift must have taken place due to academic and scholarly concerns, although the identity of the person who coined the term and the date it appeared in the professional literature still need to be established. The focus, both academically and professionally, remained on the library as a physical space.

In 1926, Dewey’s library school (which had since moved to the State Library at Albany) merged with a similar

school at the New York Public Library. The merged entity was adopted by Columbia University and renamed the School of Library Service. By that time, several other library schools had been established. Whatever was being taught at these schools, however, did not yet have an appropriate symbol that identified the discipline.

Beginning with the 1960s, automation penetrated library operations and brought in individuals who had backgrounds in other disciplines but were knowledgeable about the use of machines in information processing. This resulted in the development of a new term, “information science.” As a result, schools of library science started to offer courses in automation and, later, incorporated the new term into their names. But the two streams never merged completely—a feeling of discomfort and uncertainty was visible

FIGURE 1. MY INFORMATION SPHERE



from the beginning. One of the reasons was that there were other stakeholders who had an equal or stronger claim on “information science” (and they still do). In time, this high-sounding name went out of fashion and “science” was unceremoniously dismissed in favor of “studies” (ALA 1992).

Then, at one university, a scholar from another discipline was brought in to re-engineer the School of Information Studies. He perhaps thought that part of the problem might be its name, and he managed to drop the once-cherished word “studies” from it. The move to adopt the name “School of Information” later led to the formulation of the unusual but catchy term “iSchool.” By now, more than two dozen North American schools are using this nomenclature, and this fashion has lately spread to the Asia-Pacific region, where at least 15 schools now find solace under its comforting shade.

Worse, the term “iSchool” has generated the sister term “iProfessional,” as though the full term “information professional” were not vague enough. Try to walk out of your office and roam around the corridors of other disciplines and tell people you are an iProfessional. You will notice a look of uncertainty in their eyes. I doubt they will be able to place you on their academic or professional mental map. They will wonder what discipline you teach or to which profession you belong. This name-taking, at least to me, does not seem to have worked.

In light of this confusion, it will be comforting to know that another profession (one that we serve, in fact) once looked at us and wished at least some of us to be known by a symbol that was far more expressive than those that were in use. Almost a decade ago, in an editorial in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*, Davidoff and Florence (2000) proposed the development of a new professional, an “Informationist,” who would be responsible for supporting the medical disciplines with needed information. The term, specifically suggested for the medical field, was to be used for “a person who, in collaboration with others, is skilled in obtain-

The term “iSchool” has generated the sister term “iProfessional,” as though the full term “information professional” were not vague enough.

ing, organizing, analyzing, interpreting, and using information for the purpose of solving problems, for learning, and for anticipating possible futures” (The Informationist Discipline n.d.). A good amount of literature was published on this issue but, unfortunately, it did not produce any waves outside the health information field.

Performing Seven Functions

From the Mulla’s turban and my wanderings in the uncertain name-changing territory of our discipline and profession, I come back to myself again. Let me identify the world, both academic and professional, in which I work as presented in Figure 1.

I occupy a well-defined social space assigned to me by the discipline and profession I practice. On one side of me is a domain occupied by something known as “information,” which is enormous in size, variety and complexity, possesses several special characteristics, and is growing all the time. Luckily for me, however, it lacks the ability to organize itself. On my other side is an important domain that consists of individuals, groups and communities that use information daily in whatever activity they are pursuing.

In front of me is a domain that is occupied by systems, standards, tools, and techniques created by me and people like me from other disciplines. I can learn and use these tools to deal with the information in the space on my right. Behind me are societal forces—political, economic, social, cultural, and so on.

I am standing in the middle of these domains, which are not only powerful in their own right but also volatile and changing all the time. To cope with this situation, my discipline and profession must make appropriate adjustments on

a regular basis. Otherwise, a mismatch, similar to the one created by the Mulla’s turban, will occur.

If you examine these domains, you will discover that none of them are limited by physical space. Information is not constrained by any physical boundary, be it the four walls of a building or geographical lines on the globe. Information can reside anywhere provided it is accessible. The users of information in domain #2 and the systems in domain #3 possess the same characteristics. The societal forces in domain #4 are now global more than local.

What is my role as presented by Figure 1? My role, properly defined, will identify the competencies I must possess. It will also define the boundaries of my discipline and my profession, which should then lead to the use of appropriate symbols that will provide them with their identity.

As the mediator of these domains, I am supposed to possess the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to identify, evaluate, select, acquire, organize, maintain and disseminate relevant information for the use of my clients. Does the “economy,” “service,” or “science” of a library, or the “science” or “studies” of information, properly, adequately and justifiably describe my role as the mediator? Do the terms “iSchool” or “iProfessional” do that?

When I am performing the seven functions mentioned above, am I not managing information? “Information management” as an academic and professional term has been in use for quite some time. It was initially used by IT professionals who were mainly concerned with the processing of information in organizations by using information and communication technology. This led to the formation of the Society for Information Management in 1968,

Almost five generations and 122 years have gone by in drifting from one mismatching symbol to another, and we have been hesitating to adopt the one befitting our true identity.

with a publicly proclaimed emphasis on “Delivering Business Value through IT Leadership” (Society for Information Management n.d.). Right from the start, it was tied to business organizations.

In time, several other terms—information resources management, management information systems, management of information systems, and informatics—were used for the same purpose. Some time later, “information systems” was adopted, absorbing all of the terms mentioned above. As of now, information systems, which is concerned with IS management, infrastructure, systems acquisition and support, and databases, has been accepted as an academic discipline internationally and is being taught at many universities (Davis 2006; Wilson 1997).

It appears that the term “information management,” though still used by ICT professionals, has lost its original force in the IT world to “information systems.” If we examine the term “information management,” it implies much more than simply the processing of information in private sector organizations. It seems to fully embrace the seven functions of the mediator of information as listed above.

Reflecting Our True Spirit

In March 1989, the World Wide Web was conceived in Geneva. The Web, with its unprecedented growth and fast diffusion, has effectively blown up the four walls of the traditional library and placed my sphere of activity in a space that is not limited by any physical boundaries.

The same year, in August, in a talk at the University of the Punjab, I suggested that our use of the term “information science” was improper and that “information management” should be adopted in its stead. I concluded my talk with these words: “I can see the time fast approaching when even the

word ‘library’ will be dropped from the designation of our academic discipline in favor of ‘information management.’ Our future colleagues will then be called information managers rather than librarians” (Anwar 1991-92).

Twenty years later, it is encouraging to find examples scattered here and there of schools that have adopted this symbol. In 2008, after about eight years of internal debate, the Kuwait University LIS Program Committee thoroughly restructured its master’s curriculum. Its working paper proposed that the name of the degree be master in information management and that the department be the Department of Information Management (Kuwait University 2008).

I am praying that these changes are approved before I retire. However, I am still waiting for the global leaders of the discipline and the profession to demonstrate courage and adopt this symbol, which reflects our true spirit.

I come back to Shakespeare’s line: What’s in a name? The answer: Everything! It must have all that matters to me—my social space and the identity of my discipline and my profession. Almost five generations and 122 years have gone by in drifting from one mismatching symbol to another, and we have been hesitating to adopt the one befitting our true identity. I wish and hope that younger leaders will come forward to seriously and courageously debate and resolve this issue. **SLA**

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Supporting the Business Development Unit

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENTS ARE LIKELY TO BE BUSIER THAN EVER DURING AN ECONOMIC DOWNTURN. BY ALIGNING WITH THEM, INFORMATION CENTERS CAN HELP DEMONSTRATE THEIR VALUE AND PROMOTE THEIR SERVICES.

BY ANH HUYNH

The current global economic crisis has had dramatic impacts on businesses of all shapes and sizes. As the recession deepens, budget cuts, hiring freezes and layoffs have become a fact of life for many librarians and information professionals across North America, Europe and Asia.

As cost centers, libraries are often one of the first places management looks to cut expenses during an economic slump. Unless you can demonstrate that your library makes positive contributions to the bottom line, your job may be in jeopardy.

In response to the recession, many libraries have cut back their collections,

operations and other expenses. While cost-cutting is an essential measure during an economic downturn, it's a short-term solution and does nothing to justify your existence. It doesn't change your image or the essence of your *raison d'être*; it simply means you now cost less than you did before.

For your contributions to be considered meaningful and valuable in a corporate environment, you need to think and act like a business center and figure out ways to align yourself with the company's new objectives and top priorities (He, Chaudhuri and Juterbock 2009). You need to be proactive, find opportunities, take the initiative and demonstrate that you can do more with less. This article

explores the opportunities and relevant approaches available to corporate librarians during an economic downturn.

Revisit Your Objectives

While it has never been sensible to "be all for all," I have seen libraries and librarians strive to attain this illusory objective. The pursuit of this goal increases during an economic slump, which is the worst time to try to please everyone. Mistakes will occur more frequently and quality will suffer when you're stretched too thin, providing all the more reason for management to question your abilities and undervalue your worth.

ANH HUYNH is a competitive intelligence/reference librarian at Osler, Hoskin, and Hartcourt LLP in Toronto. She has master's degrees in information studies (library science) and business administration. She spent 10 years in business process improvement and project management before starting her second career in librarianship. She can be reached at ahuynh@osler.com.



What better way to justify your existence than to be a part of the team that “brings home the bacon?”

Don't confuse “do more with less” with “be all for all.” In fact, “do more with less” requires a strict discipline and narrow focus to succeed. Because you now have fewer resources, you need to focus on what you can do more of, and for whom. I recommend you channel your efforts into aligning your objectives with those of your organization.

Treat your position as you would in a natural competitive market. When competition is tough, you need to focus and differentiate (Porter 1998). What skills do you have that others don't? What do you know that others don't? Can you align your skills and knowledge with the company's top priorities?

Leave the clerical jobs and repetitive tasks to the administrative staff. You gain nothing by offering to do more in these areas—after all, why should the company pay you to perform tasks that can be handled by others at a lower wage? Worse, this approach prevents you from aligning with the company's priorities because you bog yourself down in non-strategic and counterproductive activities.

Identify Potential Clients

Examining your organization's top priorities will help you identify potential clients. Ask yourself these questions: Which business units play a critical role during a recession and need a great deal of information assistance? Where are the profit centers that can benefit from information research?

Answering these questions will lead you to conclude that the business development (BD) and/or sales departments should probably be at the top of your client list. This is a time when they are making more calls, visiting more customers, re-considering customers who are not their “usual suspects,” and maintaining current accounts while competing for new ones. These extra activities dramatically increase their information needs.

What better way to justify your existence than to be a part of the team that “brings home the bacon?” Why not take this opportunity to offer, promote or strengthen your library's services to the firm's profit center?

Assuming you have identified BD as one of your strategic clients, follow these five steps to gain their business:

Develop relationships. Be proactive and solicit BD executives—don't wait for them to approach you because they may have no idea what you can do for them. Librarians generally are not natural salespeople; they're more like counselors, with a desire to help others. So, take the approach that you're counseling, consulting, or building a relationship when you make your pitch (Singer 2009). Ask BD for a meeting, do your homework, and come with an agenda and an open mind. Show BD that librarians can be savvy business researchers who can speak their language and understand their business development processes, issues and challenges.

These initial meetings serve several crucial purposes. First, they formalize (or renew) the library's commitment to assisting BD; second, they strengthen the relationship between the library and BD; and third, they provide you with opportunities to conduct proper discussions with top decision makers.

Understand clients' information needs and preferences. When first dealing with clients who are not your usual or primary customers, pay attention to their particular information preferences. I have noticed that BD's preferences for information are very different from those of lawyers, who are my primary clients. While lawyers can (and will) digest a staggering amount of information, BD staff do not and will not tolerate large volumes of material. For the most part, BD folks want just the essentials.

“Just the essentials” is not a concept

with which librarians are comfortable, because they prefer to err on the side of caution. In other words, librarians figure it's better to provide more than is needed than risk overlooking something important. It's a safe approach, but is it the best approach?

Information overload can impede your clients' performance because it bogs them down with unimportant details. Too much information can and will overwhelm BD staff, and over time you will lose their business. BD folks understand the 80/20 principle: 80 percent of output results from 20 percent of effort. You can apply the same benchmark to determine how much information to provide and when to stop. Anything more is counterproductive; anything less is a missed opportunity.

Keep in mind that business decisions are often made amidst uncertainty. You should seek to determine the “good enough” point when providing business reports. While critical decisions require a higher confidence level because more is at stake, top decision makers accept some level of uncertainty due to the cost of the additional collection and analysis of information needed to provide a higher level of confidence (Hauser 2002).

Meet clients' needs. So, how do you benchmark the 80/20 ratio? The answer is simpler than you think: focus on the big picture. This is not a natural thing for librarians to do, since one of our inherent characteristics is our inclination for details. You must step out of your comfort zone and make sure that you gather 80 percent of the data or perform 80 percent of the relevant analyses in the initial 20 percent of the time available (Koch 1999), instead of spending 80 percent of your time and effort looking for 20 percent of the information.

Focus on the “why” before the “what” or the “how.” If the why is clear, you will have a good foundation for figuring out the what, where, when, who and how. Even in situations when clients come to you with a specific request (e.g., a company's background report), always strive to understand why they want the information. Is it to respond to an RFP?

Prepare for a visit with a client? Get information about a competitor? Each specific reason will require a different search strategy, criteria, medium, time frame, and presentation.

I have experienced situations in which clients asked for one thing but actually needed something else. These situations happen quite often because clients are not aware of the variety of information products available (that's our job, not theirs). They ask for something they know exists, unaware of other products that might better suit their needs.

How do you determine the confidence level—i.e., how much is good enough? While some decision makers will tell you up front, others won't or don't know what to tell you. In these situations, use your judgment based on your clients' objectives. Either way, make sure to communicate how you arrived at a given confidence level, what's in scope and out of scope, and the relevant risks and assumptions. These are important factors that your clients must know to effectively make good decisions.

Exceed your clients' expectations.

There are several services you can provide that will add value and cause your clients to see you as more than just a provider of information. One such service is to write executive summaries of your findings—a specialized skill that few others have, and one that makes you clients' jobs easier and improves your image and worth. Executive summaries are especially important for executives (hence the term). Executives are too busy to read all of your findings, so take the time to save them time.

Business analysis is another excellent added-value service that BD can use. A growing trend in the United Kingdom and other European countries is for librarians and information professionals

to transition into a diverse range of roles, such as business analysts, after the shutdown of their libraries (Hill 2008). We can learn from the Europeans' experience and develop additional skills that focus on supporting business units (because that's where the jobs are). Start thinking of providing BD or other business areas with analyses and competitive intelligence (CI) reports to help them with their strategic decision making.

Before you shrug at this idea, consider that CI is a growing area of responsibility in our profession. In 2008, CI was included for the first time in SLA's *Annual Salary Survey & Workplace Study* (Latham 2008). Nearly one-fifth of the survey respondents from Europe and North America reported they perform a CI role—a global trend that continues to grow.

You will eventually realize that 80 percent of BD's requests will be of a similar nature (there's no telling how far the 80/20 rule can go). Plan ahead by developing and proposing standardized reports and processes. Asking clients to sign off on a set of standards will force them to think things through and save everyone concerned a lot of time and unnecessary headaches. In addition, standards remove a library's dependency on any one individual (your colleagues can take over when you're on vacation) and improve clients' productivity. Clients will know exactly what to expect and how to respond, which in turn can help them plan their work loads.

Maintain relationships. Maintaining relationships takes as much work as initiating them. One way to approach this task is to obtain feedback from your clients about the products and services you provide. This is not as easy as it sounds, since they're all quite busy. Be patient, keep asking, and continue

to tweak and improve as you discover new things.

Image is important in the corporate world, so think, act, and communicate as a business peer. Instead of “support” or “assist,” think in terms of “contribute” or “advise” (Correia 2009). Ask to attend BD's monthly meetings—this will allow you to be part of their team, understand their challenges and issues, provide and receive different perspectives, reduce the communication time between departments, and plan solutions before requests can be formalized. Also, consider providing monthly updates to the BD team based on their information needs.

Last but not least, ask your BD peers and managers to join you occasionally for lunch. BD folks are generally friendly and outgoing, so it's not a particularly difficult relationship to maintain and grow. **SLA**

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Librarians figure it's better to provide more than is needed than risk overlooking something important. It's a safe approach, but is it the best approach?

Meet the 2010 Board Candidates



Beginning 9 September 2009, SLA members will cast their ballots to fill four positions on the association's board of directors:

- President-elect;
- Treasurer;
- Chapter cabinet chair-elect; and
- Division cabinet chair-elect.

Profiles of the eight candidates for these positions (two candidates for each position) appear on the following pages. Profiles of the candidates also are posted on SLA's Web site at www.sla.org/content/SLA/governance/bodsection/can/09cand/index.cfm.

In addition, each candidate appears on SLA-TV answering the following question: How can librarians and information professionals provide value-added intelligence to their organizations? To view the candidates on SLA-TV, visit www.slatv.org/channel.cfm?c=549&s=118.

Before casting your ballot, be sure to review the information below.

- Polls will open on 9 September and will remain open until 5:00 p.m. Eastern time on 1 October.
- All SLA members in good standing as of 31 August will be eligible to participate in the election.
- Members with a valid, up-to-date e-mail address on record will receive an e-mail reminder just before the polls open. To update your e-mail address, visit www.sla.org/update.
- Members may vote online or by paper ballot, but each member may cast only one vote.
- Upon request, eligible voting members will be sent a paper ballot by postal mail. Paper ballots must be completed and postmarked for return by October 1. To request a paper ballot, send a message to evote@sla.org or call +1.703.647.4950.

2010 BOARD OF DIRECTORS CANDIDATES

The issues. The answers.

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AGNES K. MATTIS



Employment: Agnes Mattis is head of the corporate library for the international law firm of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP in New York. She provides high-level research to attorneys throughout Skadden's nine U.S. and 15 international offices and also oversees the Conflict of Interest Department. Prior to joining Skadden in 1998, Agnes spent her career in the financial sector, working for Santander Investment Securities, Brown Brothers Harriman and Donaldson Lufkin & Jenrette.

SLA Experience: Agnes has been active in SLA on the chapter, division and association levels for many years. She holds the record for being president of the New York Chapter for four terms and currently serves on the chapter's Advisory Council as governance chair.

Agnes has been chair of the Business and Finance Division and most recently served on the division's Nominating Committee. She is a member of the Legal, Leadership and Management, and Museum, Arts and Humanities Divisions.

On the association level, Agnes has served on the SLA Board of Directors as the division cabinet chair (2006-2007) and also as board liaison to the Bylaws Committee and the Annual Conference Advisory Council. She has been a member of the Finance Committee and the Awards and Honors Committee and was chair of the New York Conference Committee. She currently serves as chair of the Committee on Association Governance.

Honors and Awards: In 2004, Agnes was named a Fellow of SLA. The New York Chapter presented her its Distinguished Service Award in 1995 and 2003.

Education: Agnes earned an undergraduate degree in art history from York College (CUNY) and an MLS from the Pratt Institute.

Personal: Agnes lives in Cranford, New Jersey, with Rick, her husband of 25 years. They enjoy traveling, especially to beach locations to escape the cold winters in the New York area. They love cooking for and entertaining their family and friends. Agnes collects cookbooks from every city she visits when attending the SLA Annual Conference or Leadership Summit.

CINDY ROMAINÉ



Employment: Cindy is principal of Romainiacs Intelligence Research, an information consultancy that provides in-depth research solutions to corporate clients. Previously, she worked for 16 years at Nike, Inc. as director of the design library and as corporate archivist. Nike's design library received the SLA Business and Finance Division's Center of Excellence Award for management in 2003.

SLA Experience: Cindy finished a 3½-year term on the SLA Board of Directors in December. In 2008 she pushed to make more members "Future Ready" when she chaired the SLA Innovation Laboratory, which attracted participation from 5,000+ members and was awarded SLA's Presidential Citation.

A longtime contributor to the Oregon Chapter of SLA, Cindy is serving a second term as president, having previously served from 1995-1996. Cindy has also served on the chapter's Professional Development, Consultation, and Public Relations Committees. She was co-chair of the Pacific Northwest Regional Conference of SLA in 1995.

At the international level, Cindy has been a member of the SLA Branding Task Force and the Professional Values Task Force and has served as chair of the Public Relations Committee.

Cindy is a member of the Library Management Division and the Museum, Arts and Humanities Division. She is a past member of the Business and Finance, Solos, Advertising and Marketing, and Engineering Divisions.

She has written articles for *Information Outlook* regarding SLA's strategic alignment, the branding of our profession, and professional competencies. She has conducted presentations at annual conferences on information management and resources for creative personnel.

Honors and Awards: Cindy was awarded the Greey Award, the Oregon Chapter's distinguished member award, in 2006.

Education: Cindy earned a bachelor's degree in history from the University of Oregon and graduated from the University of Washington's MLIS program.

Personal: Cindy lives outside Portland, Oregon, and enjoys yoga, hiking, cooking, and movies with subtitles. She participates in a monthly book group and periodically organizes community potlucks.

KAREN KREIZMAN RECZEK



Employment: Karen is senior manager of the Information Resources Center at Bureau Veritas, where she has worked since 1996. She previously served as senior information specialist at Bristol-Myers Squibb. She has been an adjunct faculty member in the Department of Library and Information Studies at the University of Buffalo (N.Y.) since 1994.

SLA Activities: Karen has been active at the association, chapter and division levels, including serving on the SLA Board of Directors (2001-2003) and the Centennial Commission. She chaired the 2006 Annual Conference Program Planning Committee as well as the Knowledge Management, Competitive Intelligence, and Pharmaceutical and Health Technology Divisions. She also chaired the Standards Roundtable of the Engineering Division for four years.

Karen has held several positions in the Upstate New York Chapter, including president, bulletin editor, and membership chair. She has made presentations and written articles about research, marketing, and proving the value of corporate libraries and is the author of *Establishing an Information Center: A Practical Guide*, published in 1999.

Honors and Awards: Karen was named an SLA Fellow in 2004. She was presented the Upstate New York Chapter's Member Award in 2002 and the SLA Pharmaceutical and Health Technology Division's Distinguished Member Award in 2000. In 2008, she received the Dialog Quantum InfoStar Award.

Education: Karen earned a B.S. from Clarkson University (N.Y.) and an MLS from the University of Buffalo. She holds a dual certificate in competitive intelligence and the intelligence information function from SLA.

Personal: Karen lives in East Amherst, a suburb of Buffalo, with her husband and 5-year-old daughter. She enjoys reading and watching foreign films and loves everything food: restaurants, chef biographies, and cookbooks.

DAN TREFETHEN



Employment: Dan is the Web content manager of Boeing's largest defense program. After 14 years as a solo librarian for one of Seattle's largest architectural firms, he moved to Boeing to found a library on air traffic management to support aviation safety. Five years ago he accepted his current position managing an intranet. He is embedded in a program to modernize the U.S. Army.

SLA Activities: Dan has served SLA for 30-plus years in various volunteer roles, including membership on the SLA Board of Directors during 2004-2007. He was one of two board members on the Finance Committee and was instrumental in developing the dues restructuring that was approved overwhelmingly by SLA members in 2005. He voted to approve the SLA Alignment Project and worked with the Finance Committee to ensure that the necessary funding was allocated to it.

Dan has been president and treasurer of the Pacific Northwest Chapter, chair of the Solo Librarians Division, and treasurer of the Museums, Arts and Humanities Division. He also has served on the Nominating Committee, the 2004 Conference Committee, and the Task Force on Simplification.

Honors and Awards: In 2000, Dan was named a Fellow of SLA.

Education: Dan earned a bachelor's degree in English from the University of Washington and a master's degree from the university's Information School.

Personal: Dan is part of a two-librarian family—his wife, Joanna, is a children's librarian with the Seattle Public Library. In his free time, Dan perfects his communication and negotiation skills as a trained umpire in Little League Baseball.

LIZ BLANKSON-HEMANS



Employment: Liz is director of market development for Dialog LLC in London. She previously served as director of information professional development for Dialog and Thomson Reuters (Scientific) and as central information manager at Clifford Chance, a global law firm.

SLA Activities: Liz has been active at all levels of SLA and especially in the Europe Chapter, serving as president in 2004-2005, as diversity chair since 2004, and as membership chair from 2000-2004. She was the European liaison to the Legal Division from 1999-2003 and is a member of the News, Business and Finance, Solo Librarians, Information Technology, and Leadership and Management Divisions and the Inclusion Caucus.

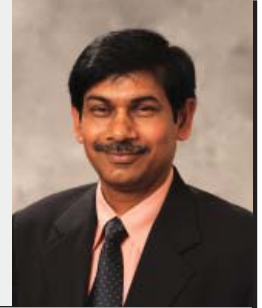
On the association level, Liz serves on the Public Relations Advisory Committee and has participated on the Nominating Committee, the Diversity Leadership Development Committee, and the 2006 Annual Conference Planning Committee. She has presented continuing education courses at SLA annual conferences every year since 2002.

Honors and Awards: Liz received the President's Circle Award for Membership Recruitment in 2007.

Education: Liz earned her bachelor's degree from the University of Science and Technology in Ghana and her postgraduate diploma in library sciences from Ealing College in London. She is a member of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals.

Personal: Liz lives just outside London with her husband and teenage son. When not "organizing" them, she loves to spend time on leisure travel, reading, and films and is especially interested in biographical and crime documentaries. According to her husband, she is an avid collector of handbags.

DEBAL C. KAR



Employment: Debal has worked for The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), one of the foremost libraries in India and the country's largest library focusing on the energy and environment, since 1986. He has held several positions and currently is a fellow in the Library and Information Center.

SLA Activities: Debal has served as secretary and president of the Asian Chapter and is now its membership chair and Nominating Committee chair. He is active in the Science and Technology Division and sits on the division's Awards Committee and Nominating Committee.

Debal has organized many seminars, workshops, meetings, and conferences in India for SLA, including the 1st International Conference of the Asian Chapter, held in New Delhi in November 2008. He proposed and led the effort to implement the "equitable dues structure" that reduced the SLA membership fee to \$35 for those earning less than US\$ 18,000.

Honors and Awards: Earlier this year, Debal received an SLA Presidential Citation. In 2008 he received the Bonnie Hilditch International Librarian Award, sponsored by the Science and Technology and Engineering Divisions, which provides an opportunity for a librarian who lives outside the United States and Canada to attend the SLA Annual Conference. In 2007 he received a Diversity Leadership Development Program (DLDP) Award, which is intended to help accelerate the advancement and visibility of members who represent a diverse population of the association.

Education: Debal holds a master's degree in philosophy and library and information science.

MARY ELLEN BATES



Employment: Mary Ellen has run her own research and consulting business since 1991, providing business intelligence to business professionals and consulting services to the information industry. Prior to starting her business, she worked for more than a decade as a special librarian for a law firm, the federal court system, a research company and a communications company.

SLA Activities: Mary Ellen has served SLA as government relations chair, international relations chair, and chair of the Telecommunications Division (which merged with the Information Technology Division) and as convener of the GLBT Caucus. She has also served as professional development chair of the Washington, D.C. Chapter.

Mary Ellen has written six books and numerous articles about the information industry and presented keynote addresses in more than a dozen countries.

Honors and Awards: Mary Ellen has received the Telecommunications Division's Member of the Year award and the Washington, D.C., Chapter's Member of the Year award. In 2001 she received the SLA Professional Award, which recognizes a special event, major achievement or specific significant contribution to the field of librarianship or information science that advances SLA's goals and objectives.

Education: Mary Ellen earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy at the University of California, Santa Barbara and an MLIS at the University of California, Berkeley.

Personal: Mary Ellen blogs at Librarian of Fortune.com, tweets as mebs, and lives her non-virtual life in the boon-docks of Colorado with her partner and dogs.

STACEY GREENWELL



Employment: Stacey is head of the Information Commons at the University of Kentucky. She previously served as head of Library Desktop Support for the university.

SLA Activities: At the association level, Stacey has chaired the Academic Division and the Information Technology Division and served on the Centennial Commission and the 2009 Conference Planning Committee. She currently serves on the 2010 Conference Planning Committee and is a member of the Academic, Information Technology, and Leadership and Management Divisions.

At the chapter level, Stacey has served as secretary of the Kentucky Chapter and editor of the chapter's bulletin. She served as virtual presence chair for the chapter in 2007-2008.

Stacey has made presentations at several SLA annual conferences and at other industry meetings.

Honors and Awards: This year, Stacey was named an SLA Fellow and a Frye Institute Leadership Fellow and received the Lyrasis NextGen Librarian Award for Leadership. She was awarded the Kentucky Chapter's Professional Award in 2006 and named its outstanding member in 2008.

Education: Stacey earned her bachelor's degree and her MLS from the University of Kentucky.

Personal: Stacey enjoys traveling and is an avid disc golf player.

SAVING SPECIAL LIBRARIES IN A RECESSION: BUSINESS STRATEGIES FOR SURVIVAL AND SUCCESS¹

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Abstract

In difficult economic times, it is common for organizations to cut back on spending. Unfortunately, one of the first places that many organizations look to make cutbacks is their own libraries. So, what should special librarians do to help their libraries survive cutbacks or even elimination? Prior literature on library management offers many personal accounts and suggestions for how to manage special libraries effectively in general and how to prevent cutbacks specifically. Much of this evidence is, however, anecdotal and specific to the industries of the host organizations that the special libraries serve. In order to determine the applicability of the techniques suggested in the literature, we surveyed 113 special librarians currently working in a wide variety of special libraries (e.g., in law firms, government agencies, corporations, hospitals, etc.) in the greater Washington, D.C., metropolitan area in spring 2008. Among the respondents to our survey, 61% have worked at a library that had faced serious cutbacks or elimination. The respondents commented on whether strategies mentioned in prior literature could stop slated cutbacks or prevent cutbacks from taking place in their own organizations. Additionally, we have conducted four case studies: two on libraries that successfully prevented cutbacks and two on libraries that failed to prevent cutbacks (one of which was later able to regain congressional funding). Based on our literature review, survey, and case studies, we have found that while cutting costs and hand-delivering materials may be helpful in some organizations but not others, it is universally essential for special librarians to know the particular needs of other members of their organization, align library services with the organizational goals, and aggressively market services to their organizations (especially the management). Our findings reinforce the idea that, in order for special libraries to weather today's economic recession and thrive in the long run, they must be proactive.

Introduction

In difficult economic times, it is common for organizations to cut back on spending. Unfortunately, one of the first places that many organizations look to make cutbacks is their own libraries. So, what should special librarians do to help their libraries survive cutbacks or even elimination? Both the scholarly and professional literature on special library management has suggested various ideas to special librarians, ranging from hand-delivering requested library materials to serving on key committees within the larger organization. There is little evidence, however, that any of these suggestions work beyond the specific situations in which they have been tried. We look across various types of special libraries in order to find common strategies that will be useful to multiple, if not all, types of special libraries. We begin with a survey, in which we ask a variety of special librarians what strategies have worked in their libraries. Next we examine the cases of a government library, a corporate library, a law library, and an engineering library to see what common lessons can be learned from their successes and failures. We conclude the paper with a set of generalized business strategies for the survival and success of special libraries.

Editor's Note:

This paper was selected as the best of nine contributed papers submitted for presentation at the SLA 2009 Annual Conference & INFO-EXPO. To read all the papers, visit www.sla.org/content/events/conference/ac2009/conference/contibpap.cfm.

Literature Review

Prior literature on library management offers many personal accounts and suggestions for how to manage special libraries effectively in general and how to prevent cutbacks specifically. Much of this literature, however, is anecdotal and specific to the industries of the host organizations that the special libraries serve. Matarazzo and Prusak's 1995 survey of 103 corporate senior managers found that from a management point of view, special libraries typically contribute to corporate strategy through research, assisting senior managers with strategic planning, and staying abreast of new technologies.² Managers believe that in addition to the primary library service tasks of acquisition, storage, and retrieval of information, special libraries help their corporations by synthesizing research, providing training, and keeping the organizations up-to-date with developments in the field, but that they are not essential. Matarazzo and Prusak recommended that librarians learn the information needs of senior managers, market to those who need information, and become a part of the business.³ Marshall surveyed 390 managers from five major Canadian financial institutions during 1991-1992 and found that library information had an

impact on decision-making.⁴ Portugal found that corporations outsourced library services in order to save money.⁵ Although most corporations have not outsourced their entire libraries, many corporate libraries need to find new services in order to compete with new vendors that provide traditional library services. Other studies have explored how to demonstrate the effectiveness of a particular type of special library. For example, Sen's study showed that the users of a medical library wanted librarians to be knowledgeable about the topics they were researching and be proactive in serving them.⁶

Besides research studies, various authors have offered anecdotal evidence for different techniques that have worked to keep specific special libraries functioning. Each recent issue of *Information Outlook*, the magazine of the Special Libraries Association (SLA), runs a regular column on information management, which features tips and guidance in special library management. For example, Claggett and Guevara wrote about management techniques that work from their own experiences as a manager and as an employee.⁷ They both argued that teamwork is an important part of a library's success. Likewise, Guevara argued for the benefits

FIGURE 1. DEMOGRAPHICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

QUESTION	RESPONSE	PERCENTAGE
In what types of special libraries have you worked?	Corporate	37.17%
	Government	50.44%
	Law	38.05%
	Medical	13.27%
	Museum	2.65%
	News	7.96%
	Other	27.43%
Approximately how many cataloged volumes does the library at which you currently work have?	0 or Did Not Respond	26.55%
	1-9,999	28.32%
	10,000-19,999	14.16%
	20,000 or More	30.97%
How long have you been a librarian?	0-5 years	23.90%
	6-10 years	11.50%
	11-15 years	20.35%
	16-20 years	10.62%
	20+ years	33.63%
How satisfied are you with your job as a librarian?	Very satisfied	67.26%
	Somewhat satisfied	29.20%
	Not at all satisfied	2.65%
	Don't know	0.89%

of proactively marketing a library to its corporate clients by hosting information fairs and being a part of new employees' orientation.⁸ Similarly, Schachter suggested that the ability to communicate effectively with managerial boards is an important skill for librarians, especially those working in the non-profit sector.⁹ Clearly the literature offers counsel to any special library anticipating reductions. However, it is prescient to note that most of these techniques derived from a single library's testimonial.

Survey: Strategies That Save Libraries

In order to determine the applicability of the strategies suggested in the literature, we surveyed special librarians based in the greater Washington, D.C., area. Our survey consisted of 10 questions. We wanted to know how many special libraries have faced a cutback or an elimination, and the extent of the role (on a three-point scale—major, some, or none) that the special librarians think the following strategies play in preventing or stopping cutbacks: (1) reduce costs, (2) form partnerships with other libraries, (3) make librarians visible in the organization, (4) advertise library services to other members of the organization, and (5) advertise library services to the organization's management. These strategies have been recommended in special library literature as effective techniques.^{10,11,12,13,14} We asked the survey respondents to estimate the percentage of special libraries that have strategies in place to prevent cutbacks and whether special librarians thought it would ever be impossible to prevent cutbacks. We also asked about the demographics of the special librarians and their job satisfaction. Some respondents included stories or quotations to elaborate on their responses to the survey.

We conducted the survey by e-mailing a link to the Web page of our survey to members of the D.C. Chapter of the Special Library Association (DC/SLA) and the Law Librarians' Society of D.C. (LLSDC) between 12 March and 24 March, 2008.

Results of the Survey

We received 113 usable responses. As Figure 1 shows, our sample was diverse and the respondents were special librarians with different levels of experiences, working in several types of special libraries of various sizes. Most of them were very satisfied or satisfied with their jobs.

Among the respondents to our survey, 61% have worked at a library that had faced serious cutbacks or elimination. Regarding the strategies for preventing cutbacks, many respondents thought that advertising the library's services to other organizational members (45%) and to the management (52%) would play a major role. Those special librarians who have not experienced a cutback or elimination of their libraries attached significantly more importance to these marketing strategies in cutback prevention than did those who have experienced a cutback or elimination. Additionally, the strategy of advertising library services to the management is also

significantly related to job satisfaction. Respondents very satisfied with their jobs considered advertising to the management significantly more important in preventing cutbacks than did those not satisfied. While there is agreement on the effectiveness of advertising library services to other employees and the management of an organization, respondents disagreed about whether they thought other strategies could prevent cutbacks or elimination. Respondents who are current and former law librarians considered cost reduction significantly more important in preventing cutbacks than other respondents.

When cutbacks have already been announced, we found even less agreement on what, if anything, can be done to save the library. Most respondents only thought advertising library services to the management (48%) would play a major role in saving a library from undergoing announced cutbacks. Law librarians, however, thought this strategy significantly less important than did other respondents. Those who have worked in the libraries of nonprofit organizations found it significantly more important to form partnerships with other libraries to share resources in preventing cutbacks than did respondents who have not worked in nonprofit libraries. Corporate librarians reported that it is significantly less important to cut costs or to make librarians visible in stopping cutbacks than did respondents who have not worked in corporate libraries.

Librarians, especially government librarians, believe there is a limit to what can be done to save a library. We asked our respondents, "How likely is it that a library will still undergo serious cutbacks or elimination despite the librarians' best efforts to prevent them?" On a scale of 1 to 100, with 1 being extremely unlikely, 50 being equally unlikely as likely, and 100 being extremely likely, the mean of the responses was 73. The mean of the responses from government librarians was nearly 77, as opposed to 62 from medical librarians.

The survey has shed light on the applicability of the five strategies recommended by prior literature to different types of special libraries. To understand why some strategies work while others do not under certain circumstances, we further conducted four in-depth case studies.

Case Studies of Cutbacks and Eliminations: Successes and Failures

In order to understand how cutbacks and eliminations occur in different special library environments and discover what solutions could be learned and applied by special libraries facing similar situations, we studied special libraries in four organizations: KPMG LLP; Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates (WJE); the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); and Apple Corporation. The criteria for selecting these cases rested on two principal factors: (1) the level of information available to us and (2) the inclusion of diverse types of special libraries in order to make recommendations that would be applicable to a broad number of types of special libraries. For brevity, in this paper we focus on KPMG's National Tax Library and discuss the lessons learned from the other three cases.

KPMG National Tax Library

In 1998, KPMG LLP was in the process of establishing a small, centralized headquarters for tax consulting, staffed by tax attorneys as opposed to auditors and accountants (who made up the largest employee population of the firm). The idea was to not only provide newer services to clients but also take advantage of the increasingly complicated scope of tax law. Washington, D.C., was the natural choice, given its proximity to the Internal Revenue Service and the legislature as well as its reputation for housing many prestigious law firms.

At the time, KPMG's "library" consisted of bookshelves scattered throughout the firm, usually maintained by a practice group, and whatever else individuals ordered on their own. Often there were too many copies of some books and not enough of others. Loose-leaf filing of updates was sporadic and mediocre at best, not to mention time-consuming. There was no central apparatus that could aid the professionals in finding materials and doing research projects.

The firm was also in the process of downgrading all libraries nationally. This was a common trend in law firms, which often increasingly relied entirely on access to online database services such as Lexis or Westlaw for research needs. Frequently this trend meant more office space and considerably less funds for maintaining a library and staff. Despite the closures, the D.C. tax office not only managed to keep the current library as it stood, but also hired a new librarian, designed a dedicated library within the building, and secured funding to staff the library. Today the library remains a strong and integral part of the firm.

What helped them succeed? Marketing was the initial key to making the library a reality. The new tax department called itself the Washington National Tax Office, which differentiated the department as a separate entity that offered specialized services. In keeping with the theme of identifying via name, they presented the library to the managing partners as the National Tax Library (NTL). These marketing efforts served two purposes. First, the library's name created an image of providing a specialized service for the entire firm (which mirrors the services that Washington National Tax provides). This purpose led to the decision to move the materials from the libraries that had been closed into the central library. Professionals throughout the firm began to associate the National Tax Library as the best place to get research help, hard-to-find materials, and general reference services. The second purpose of a centralized library was to strengthen the reputation of both KPMG and its budding Washington National Tax Office since the firm could now boast a National Tax Library among its clientele and its rivals.

An additional benefit of the library's success was that the librarian began maintaining open channels with all levels of the management, viewing them not only as users but also as "investors" in the "business" of the library. In order to further improve its images and services, the new library employed a diverse set of tactics, such as contacting the managing partner in order to explain the current library system problems as

well as establishing an NTL Committee, which included the library staff, the managing partner of Washington National Tax, and other types of professionals. By studying the firm's library practices, the NTL Committee learned that the users often purchased whatever library items they wanted, were reimbursed, and then maintained the subscriptions themselves. As a result, the committee decided that having all materials in a central location would be cheaper and easier to maintain and save time for the departmental administrative staff, who had often been charged with ordering and maintaining the subscriptions. A centralized subscriptions policy also saved the firm space. Additionally, the NTL Committee recommended that group leaders could make decisions on what resources their groups would need, but the library would be responsible for all of the ordering.

Also, in an effort to understand user needs, the new librarian asked patrons to fill out a questionnaire rating their use of resources and the value of the resources, and describing their research styles. The survey revealed which resources were lacking (legislative history materials, various online databases, and periodicals that were not available through the firm's current Lexis subscription). It also revealed that the users were unhappy with the current way of doing things (individual subscriptions/resource maintenance) and that they welcomed a central library that would be the main source of information. A corporate library would increase ease of use and eliminate clutter in personal and general office spaces. The NTL Committee also realized that junior staff (associates and senior associates) relied heavily on library services in research projects. They needed a wide range of materials to help them conduct research as well as a centralized place to locate information. Ultimately the survey helped to address user needs and illustrate that the librarian made efforts to understand the firm's requirements as it grew.

The library also conducted an information audit that involved constant contact with the heads of functional groups as well as the heads of the entire department (which made everyone a part of the process) as a means of gathering information about what materials were already used, what materials were needed, and what were the pressing concerns and information needs of the firm's management and employees. One tactic the library employed was to set up multiple communication points. The plan was communicated in various ways, first in a memo that addressed the needs of the organization and how the library would be helping to address those needs, thus justifying the library's existence. Then the NTL Committee listed the goals and deliverables for the library. As a result, all users could not only see what the library could do for them, but also track and understand the changes that were being made to their ability to access information. The users and management were extremely well-informed about the library's actions and the ways that these actions could add value to their own work and save them time. In addition, the library employed business principles, immediately defined its goals, and created a detailed plan that it would follow in order to achieve

tangible results. The plan addressed specific issues at a time, starting with an audit to figure out what materials already exist throughout the office that can be consolidated into the library, reduce multiple copies, and decide what else was needed for the collection. Record keeping, goal statements, and an overarching project plan were particularly successful elements of the plan. Regarding record keeping, the library made sure that all records of meetings included a defined focus, a specific timeline, and outlined goals. Another business practice introduced by the library was writing goal statements, such as “A Business Case for Change,” which clearly outlined what the current system for research and resource organization involved and what the new library intended to do. This was used to justify the purchase of materials and resources, the allotment of dedicated space within the building for the library, and the hiring of additional personnel (in this case, a library clerk).

Finally, the library advocated for creating an overarching project plan that listed goals, needs, and deliverables. The plan sought to address the following questions: Can you define your library? What is the plan for the future? Do you have a risk management structure? The goals were used to establish a model for the desired library and the needs addressed various resources that could not be provided for by the committee itself. Lastly, the deliverables were addressed first as a general list of tangible things that could be done to fulfill the model goal, and then this list outlined each action while spelling out the steps necessary to undertake the action. The strategies that the KPMG National Tax Library employed helped to make it possible to create a stronger community within a fairly new, but growing, organization which was looking to prove its worth to a larger overarching firm that previously had had other areas of tax specialty.

The Library at WJE

Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc. (WJE) is a 53-year-old firm composed of engineers, architects, and material scientists providing solutions to problems in all types of buildings. Headquartered in Northbrook, Illinois, WJE has 18 branches throughout the country. In 2001, WJE’s management was considering outsourcing its library services when they hired a new librarian, Penny Sympton, who vowed to make the library indispensable. This librarian alone served the entire firm of over 300 employees. While each location had some materials available on site, the only library proper, with about 7,000 items in inventory, was located at the headquarters. The library was underused, had an online catalog that was only accessible to the librarian, and housed a poorly organized collection. As a result, Sympton had a lot of downtime in her early days at WJE.

What helped her succeed? Sympton began familiarizing herself with the collection, the firm’s mission, and the day-to-day needs of the engineers as she settled in. She identified and licensed several databases that were useful to the firm, but her most important realization was that the engineers did

not have enough time to browse through the collection for useful sources. Hence she began hand delivering materials to those who made requests in the firm headquarters, introducing herself while also marketing the current library resources and services as well as noting areas of research interest for future reference. She continued marketing the underused services through presentations in offices, at lunches, and virtually for those in other locations. In these sessions she was able to garner input from users, walk them through new technologies and services, and promote the items in the collection while introducing herself to many within the firm. Sympton tried to make it clear that she was available to do research, but that there were also many good resources to help users find information on their own. As library services became better known, the collection both in the main library as well as in the other branches grew and was accessed by users more often and more efficiently. Ultimately, not only was the WJE library not outsourced, but also the firm hired a part-time clerk to aid Sympton in the library.¹⁵

EPA Libraries

The Bush Administration, in early 2006, announced a \$1.5 million budget cut from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regional libraries for fiscal year 2007 (beginning in Oct. 2006) and a \$500,000 cut from its headquarters library—a 50 percent reduction of the budget. EPA administrators justified the closures by saying that the collection either was already online or would be made available online, but then it was announced that “the digitization of many unique EPA print materials would take up to two years.”^{16,17} Some 10,000 EPA scientists, engineers, and other specialists undertook a letter-writing effort to Congress, arguing that the cutbacks “would put thousands of scientific studies out of reach and hinder emergency preparedness, anti-pollution enforcement, and long-term research.”¹⁸ Finally, in spring 2008, Congress restored the budget for the EPA libraries.

What went wrong? EPA administrators clearly did not realize the value of the EPA libraries and how long it would take to digitize the collection. Librarians, for their part, could have kept metrics that would have enlightened administrators on the full range of library services. EPA administrators were unaware, for example, of the extent to which users accessed library services online or via e-mail, and not just by visiting the library premises. In fact, the GAO (Government Accountability Office) reported that the EPA “did not adequately consult agency staff, outside experts or stakeholders before undertaking the reorganization, and failed to take into account the needs of the public to have access to the materials.”¹⁹

The Apple Library

The Apple Library reported to the Advanced Technology Group, a strong supporter and user of the library’s research services.²⁰ However, when Apple’s financial picture took a

downturn in 1997, Apple's management decided to cut the library staff from 14 to 7 and decided to outsource the library services and require each department to pay for its research needs from its budget. The management believed that there would be less demand and therefore a "reduction in expenditures for information."²¹

What went wrong? The Apple Library did not cultivate its stakeholders. Customers may value library services, but they do not control corporate budgets. This library would have been in a better position had it cultivated more than one group within Apple and kept better return-on-investment metrics of its services. When budget cuts were threatened, even though the library was a success at serving internal users and promoting Apple products and services to outside educational and library groups, it did not survive elimination, because it had not been prepared to demonstrate to the management that having an in-house library was more efficient and cost effective than outsourcing the library services.

Strategies for Survival and Success

The lessons we learned from the survey and the case studies have allowed us to recommend four strategies to special librarians to help them work to save their libraries from budget cuts.

Market Yourself Aggressively. Special librarians must aggressively market the library's services and resources to the management and other members of their host organizations. They need to inform executives about how library services are actually used, the extent of such use, and the impacts of library services on organizational objectives. As trained information professionals, special librarians usually can find the right information more efficiently than other employees in an organization. Therefore, special librarians need to convince the users that work productivity will increase when non-librarians spend their time on core tasks instead of library-related duties. Additionally, the management may think outsourcing saves money, because the use of electronic databases, for example, is not always included in corporate overhead but instead individual departments pay the costs. As a result, special libraries need to offer more value-added and customized services in order to differentiate their services from the generic services provided by outside vendors. Therefore, in-house special libraries should streamline their operation in order to become more marketable in the information marketplace.²²

Know Your Audience. Special librarians need to know who their target audience is and how to meet the audience's particular needs. Libraries must continue focusing on being user friendly, further facilitating the research process, and helping to obtain the information that organizations and their employees need to succeed. Consequently, the library should offer training, either in groups or one-on-one. With a good understanding of user needs, special librarians should be proactive and keep an eye out for applicable information that meets user needs and deliver it even before the information is specifically requested. In addition, special libraries should

build good connections with the management and other departments in order to nurture champions that can support the library in both good and hard economic times.

Be a Part of the Organization. Special librarians need to ensure that the libraries are integrated into the organization's daily workflow and make an impact on its goals.²³ As a result, the library will be viewed by the organization as an active and valued member of the "team."²⁴ Special libraries should try to establish the library manager position as being equivalent to department heads in other areas of the organization, with comparable title and similar hierarchy of supervision. Special librarians need to be proactive in adopting new technologies in line with the strategies of the host organization, read trade publications, and keep current with the innovations applied within the host organization's industry.

Prepare Metrics and Justifications. Special libraries need to gather usage and performance information throughout the year, whether a return-on-investment report on services, or survey results from users converted into monetary terms, or usage statistics from vendors on electronic resources.²⁵ Librarians should look for ways to reduce costs or to justify current or projected costs through the use of usage and performance metrics.

Conclusion

Based on our literature review, survey, and case studies, we have found that while cutting costs and hand-delivering materials may be helpful in some organizations but not others, it is universally essential for special librarians to know the particular needs of other members of their organization, align library services with the organization's vision and mission, and aggressively market library services and resources to the management and other employees within the host organization. Our findings reinforce the value of being proactive in order for special libraries to weather today's economic recession and thrive long-term. Based on the strategies we have recommended above, we further articulate the underlying philosophy: Special libraries facing cutbacks or elimination need to employ and assimilate effective business strategies in order to increase their chances of survival and success.

Endnotes

- ¹ This paper represents the views of the authors only and does not necessarily represent the views or professional advice of KPMG LLP, whose National Tax Library is studied here.
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- ¹¹ Guevara, "Proactive Marketing: Connecting with the Corporate Client."
- ¹² Schachter, "Working with Boards Effectively Is an Important Management Role."
- ¹³ Ruth K. Seidman, "Building Global Partnerships for Library Cooperation," <http://www.sla.org/pubs/SLA%20pubs/BUILDING%20GLOBAL%20PARTNERSHIPS%20FOR%20LIBRARY%20COOPERATION.pdf>.
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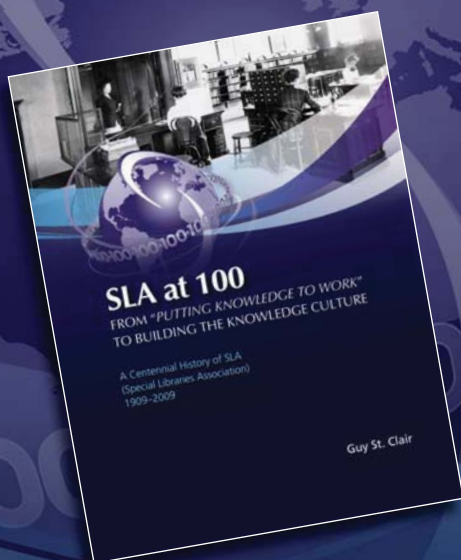
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Internet Resources Newsletter

<http://www.hw.ac.uk/libwww/irn/irn.html>

As a longtime subscriber, I look forward to receiving this monthly newsletter (available through e-mail and RSS) that’s chock full of research-oriented sources. It’s produced by the staff of Heriot-Watt University Library in Scotland, and many of the sites are oriented toward the United Kingdom and Europe. There’s a “New and Notable” section in each issue that lists dozens of sites and brief descriptions, with one or more of them highlighted in the “Nice Web Site” section. A recent issue covered resources on data repositories, chemistry, scholarly paper award winners, U.K.-based businesses, and Russian dissertations. Looking for blogs, feeds, and Twitter resources? There’s a list in each issue,

too. The newsletter ends with some suggestions for fun sites (there can never be too many of those!) to visit after you’ve finished your research.



The Food Librarian

<http://foodlibrarian.blogspot.com/>

What’s not to like about this blog from Mary, a Los Angeles-based librarian, who bakes and beautifully photographs her creations for your reading and discovery pleasure? Each post offers a description of her baking experience and the source of the recipe (with a link if available). She also offers glimpses into her life by sharing culinary-related experiences and celebrations. Mary started the blog, and baking, two years ago as a beginner and has continued to learn (and excel—you should see some of her creations) and inspire readers along the way. Through her, I learned about online baking groups, which are similar to book groups but with flour and butter! **SLA**



CAROLYN SOSNOWSKI is SLA’s information specialist. She has more than 13 years’ experience in libraries, including six years in SLA’s Information Center. She can be reached at csosnowski@sla.org.

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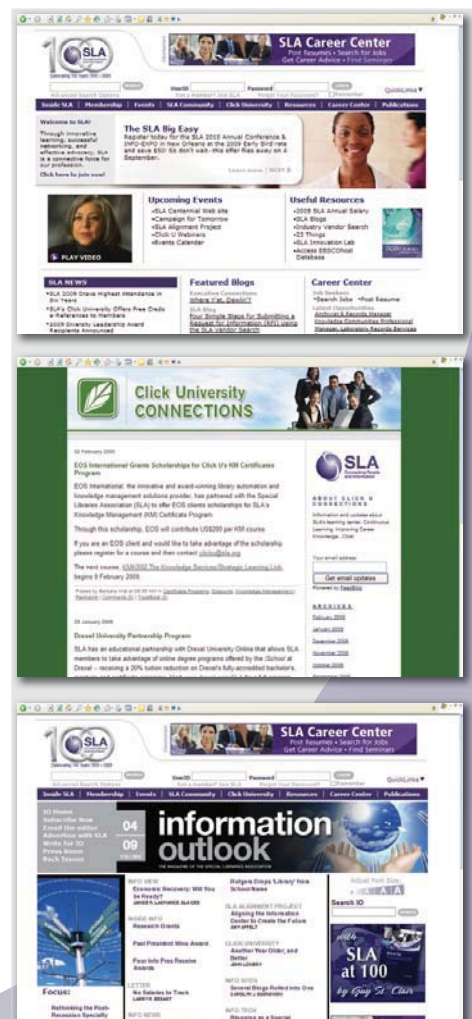
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Committing to Innovation: No Excuses

There are plenty of excuses not to innovate, and no good reasons not to. All it takes is commitment, resourcefulness, and a willingness to accept discomfort.

BY STEPHEN ABRAM, MLS

I had the opportunity to present the luncheon speech to the Leadership and Management Division at our awesome SLA Centennial Conference in Washington, D.C. I was asked to speak on the topic of innovation. I've thought about this a lot and have come to a couple of conclusions, which I shared with the folks at the luncheon. I'll share a few thoughts here and some links, too, for your summer reading.

Mitch Ditzkoff, in his blog *The Heart of Innovation* (www.ideachampions.com/weblogs), recently posted an item titled "The Top 10 Reasons Why Your CEO Sabotages Innovation." Here are his 10 reasons:

10. Innovation sparks dissonance and discomfort.
9. Innovation increases the amount of seeming failures.
8. Results only show up long-term.
7. More meetings.
6. CEOs conserve resources. Innovation requires more resources.
5. Innovation flies in the face of analysis.
4. The perceived absence of time.
3. Over-reliance on cost-cutting and incremental improvement.
2. Inability to enroll a committed team of champions.

1. Insufficient conviction that innovation will make a difference.

You can see these are phrased as reasons and not as excuses. When you phrase the issues as reasons, you can deal with them; when they're excuses, you can feel blue and unmotivated.

For example, when I see the reasons above, I reframe them as follows:

10. Learn to understand that discomfort comes from ambiguity and seek to resolve it rather than avoid it. Avoiding change doesn't seem to work.
9. Understand that failure is a learning experience. As a team member and individual, celebrate and learn from failures rather repeating them.
8. I'm thrilled that I'm a long-term rather than a short-term thinker. There are too few of us in the Western world!
7. Run good meetings, and only when necessary. Duh!
6. Be resourceful! It takes creativity and imagination to turn lemons into lemonade.
5. I can encourage working in teams where we are diverse in many ways and respect everyone's

diversity of contribution.

4. Time is the one immutable in our lives. I am amazed at the number of people who seriously worry about time, as though they can change it. If you must worry, worry about something you can change.
3. Cutting costs and making small improvements are about management. In many ways, they create a culture of fault-finding that is negative. Innovation, on the other hand, requires leadership. Lead!
2. Enrolling champions is a process, not an event. Recognize that it takes time, trust and excitement to gain commitment. You only need a few angels, not the whole choir.
1. Commitment is a process. No one commits wholly and fully right from the start. Trust the process and bring people along. Stand back from the steps and see the whole staircase.

Committing to Innovation

My rewrites of reasons #1 and #2 emphasize the need for commitment when trying to innovate. So, what have I learned about commitment? I think Paul Williams, in his *Think for A Change* innovation blog (<http://blog.thinkforachange.com>), gets it right when he asserts that a commitment to innovation requires a willingness to do the following:

- View innovation as a continuous process, not a one-time act;
- Provide adequate resources—time,

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money, and people—to innovation initiatives;

- Tolerate ambiguity, risk and learned failures;
- Provide cover for ideas and the people who create them;
- Commit to innovation even during tough financial times;
- Create a culture of creativity, new ideas and collaboration;
- Define and share corporate problems, challenges, and opportunities;
- Define and share a growth strategy and vision of the future;
- Reward and recognize people for being creative and innovative;
- Establish metrics for innovation;
- Evaluate projects and portfolios for innovation strategy;
- Challenge the status quo;
- Champion new ideas;
- Set meaningful goals;
- Search the horizon;
- Solve problems; and
- Exceed customer expectations.

Reading this list, you may think it's no wonder that most companies don't innovate. And the fact is that, even in the most innovative of organizations, you'll still hear excuses for not innovating. The following are just three excuses I hear too often:

Excuse Numero Uno: "I can't be innovative because my employer doesn't give me enough money and staff. And, oh yeah, they block access to technology so I can't even learn it. End of story!"

Innovation is not so much about resources as it is about resourcefulness. As a matter of fact, there are a number of management strategies that include under-resourcing a project in order to drive more innovation and tighter thinking. It may even drive some imagination and creativity as well.

Too much money and/or too many resources don't drive more innovation—they lead to less. Oh, and no employer should trap you by reducing your value to your next employer. Take Click University courses from home or your public library.

Excuse Number Two: "I just can't decide what to innovate that will be successful right away."

This one is easy—don't go BIG right away. Try a few innovations that are small, but polish them up, whether they're just about conducting a meeting in a better way or improving a memo or e-mail. Build up to big projects, but try the safe ways to proceed: pilots, trials, small projects, and experiments. Sometimes, even the big stuff is positioned this way to get folks to engage without being frightened.

Keep in mind that there isn't a guaranteed win out there. Every innovation has some amount of risk in it—personal, professional, or institutional. Of course, the biggest risk is not innovating at all.

Excuse Number Three: "Maybe librarians (or I) don't have the personality for innovation." All people, and especially SLA members, have the personality to be innovative and creative (see the sidebar for an example). It would be so much easier to believe otherwise in a culture of "can't."

No Excuses Not to Proceed

SLA is on the leading edge of innovation. If you visit the SLA Web site and check out the plethora of services and value-added content it offers, you'll see that SLA stands out in front of most associations in delivering value for membership. We are the first global and international information profession.

I worry that some of my fellow members are letting the daunting challenges facing us scare them. To move forward, we must encourage our folks to take a stronger step into the future based on the results of the alignment research. I'm proud of the alignment research that SLA has undertaken, and I hope we'll have the courage to act on the research results that we have commissioned.

We have no excuses not to proceed.

SLA

EMULATING MY DAUGHTER

I shared my opinion of excuse #3 with the Leadership and Management Division by describing my daughter, Sydney. She's the most creative and innovative person I know. She wants to be different. She plays at everything, and everything is an opportunity for change and being different. (She once wanted to sign her tax form in graffiti calligraphy. I still regret talking her out of it.)

She throws things away a lot. Sometimes she grates on people (including her parents) because she wants so completely to be creative. She takes risks.

Sydney has a huge network. She avoids cliques so she can learn from everyone. She never makes excuses and tries to learn from her failures. She rarely feels anything is impossible, and if she doesn't like the answer she tries to change the system (or at least "game it" a little). She is committed in her very soul to innovation.

Despite outward appearances, I am not at all like my daughter. I am fearful. I don't like failing and I'd really rather know the right way to do something than walk out in front. I like an organized, predictable world. Hell, I'm a librarian, after all!

I've learned a lot from Sydney, though. When she was born, I learned to play again. When she listened to music that I didn't understand, I learned to appreciate music again. When I saw her clothing, jewelry, art, photography, movies, choreography, gym routines, and anything else I didn't know anything about but feared were fraught with risk, I remembered Sydney's mantra—just practice the skills and try again and enjoy the journey.

I feel that I'm a better person for learning from Sydney. I'm writing this column on her 21st birthday. She's still challenging the world and always will. I try to emulate her.

Developing and Applying Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence refers to the “soft” or “people” skills that librarians need to develop and use so they can become leaders within their organizations.

BY DEBBIE SCHACHTER, MLS, MBA

Emotional intelligence (EI) is a concept that has progressed from being somewhat of a management fad to being a generally accepted foundation for good leadership. Ever since Daniel Goleman introduced EI within the context of business in his 1995 publication, “Emotional Intelligence,” the concept has continued to develop within leadership, business and self-help literature. Today it is generally accepted that a person’s level of emotional intelligence is a good indicator of how s/he will perform in the work environment.

EI is more than a tool for measuring leadership potential—it identifies the many “soft” or “people” skills that make individuals successful in the workplace. It provides another means of predicting and understanding the ability to lead, outside of academic or other traditional performance measures.

Emotional intelligence boils down to your ability to control your emotions and anticipate and react to others’ emotional responses. Specifically, EI emphasizes the need to (1) manage your own emotions, (2) handle others’ emotions and anger, (3) understand others’ feelings through non-verbal cues (essentially empathy), and (4) delay personal gratification. Definitions

of EI vary, and some experts posit that it encompasses five abilities: self-awareness, handling your emotions, self-motivation, empathy, and social skills. The concept itself, however, is essentially the same.

The Consortium for Research on Emotional Intelligence in Organizations, an organization that promotes the practice of EI, identifies several personal and social competencies as keys to emotional intelligence. Personal competencies include self-awareness, self-regulation and self-motivation; social competencies include social awareness and social skills. Some people seem to have been born with these competencies, while others must develop them in social and professional environments. At a very broad level, these competencies are part of the process of maturing from childhood to adulthood. Developing these competencies requires conscious awareness and practice.

How does EI Relate to Leadership?

Leadership encompasses a complex set of skills that confer the ability to influence and establish rapport with others. Most leaders are not born with these

skills; instead, they learn them through hard work, education and the study of people and situations. Although leadership ability is linked to motivation, leaders cannot motivate others—they can only motivate themselves. By understanding the needs of others, however, leaders can create a work environment that makes it possible to persuade and influence people to see the benefits of behaving the way they want.

The concepts of emotional intelligence are essential to leadership development. Persuasion is the ability to convince others that your ideas have merit and should be pursued, and it is only possible to persuade if we are aware of what motivates others and are able to communicate effectively with others. Influence is the ability to exert power over others, while rapport is the art of creating a positive environment in which others wish to cooperate. All of these abilities are strongly connected to interpersonal skills.

Some believe the field of emotional intelligence does not have the research findings to justify its claims that leadership success correlates with personal and social skills. Others feel that EI does not predict performance specifically and is difficult to measure.

A number of recent studies and surveys seem to back up the link between EI and leadership success. Studies indicate that EI measures do help to identify workplace stars. When individuals are tested on their level of emotional intelligence, those who rate highly do show success in the

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workplace. As an article in *Employee Benefit News* (Robbins 2007) stated, "Employers may want to pay closer attention to EI because researchers estimate that emotional intelligence accounts for more than 60 percent of performance ability and matters twice as much as technical proficiency or intelligence in some positions."

Common sense suggests that EI does play a role in developing and maintaining successful relationships with colleagues, supervisors and staff. The role of emotional intelligence in decision making is now also understood to be important, leading to more value being placed upon personal competencies in the areas of self-awareness and self-regulation.

Emotional intelligence is also said to predict performance in jobs that require a high level of customer service

(such as information professionals) as well as the ability to handle stress. Most tellingly, it indicates transformational leadership ability—potentially the most effective and sought-after leadership skill.

Developing Self-awareness

As with all areas of leadership development, EI places a lot of emphasis on practicing and obtaining feedback. There are numerous self-tests available to help you identify your strengths and weaknesses generally and your emotional intelligence specifically. It is a good idea to try these tests periodically to help you improve your self-awareness.

Receiving feedback is also important, either through performance evaluations or by asking colleagues and others. For younger information professionals, using a mentor is an excel-

lent opportunity to receive feedback outside the work evaluation setting.

You can also work on your EI competences by improving specific skills, such as speaking (and learning how to communicate better in general) or stress management. With practice and a willingness to be open to feedback, you can improve your self-awareness—probably the biggest step you can take to improve your EI. **SLA**

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Finding and Providing Information Aren't Enough

Information professionals need to help executives make the best-informed decisions possible and make sure they understand the value of that service.

BY JOHN R. LATHAM

Reading the January/February 2009 *Information Outlook* article on the key findings of SLA's alignment project made me think how lucky or prescient we were to have started this project when we did. Would we have invested the sums involved in today's economic environment? I doubt it.

What a great time to receive the results, just when organizations are taking a long, hard look at the relevance and value of every department and function. The report concentrates on how SLA can remain relevant and valuable within the information profession, but in doing so it focuses on the relevance and value of information professionals within their organizations.

I get the impression from my colleagues in the profession that most special librarians are adapting to the changing needs of their users or customers, but does senior management see this? The alignment article in the January/February issue referred to the findings from Jim Matarazzo's 1981 study that libraries were being closed because their organizations felt they were no longer in touch with what was going on inside the organization or understood where it was heading. Not much has changed, except that in the current economy it is even more crucial that we stay relevant and are focused completely on where our organizations are going.

In many cases, executives have to make unexpected and quick revisions to the goals of their organizations, and we are in a prime position to find and provide the information that helps them make those decisions. But finding and providing are not enough—we need to make sure executives know *how* the infor-

mation we provide creates a competitive advantage and improves the bottom line. One of the key strategic issues uncovered by the alignment study was that librarians and information professionals need to be defined in terms of the value and benefit they provide to their organizations, such as facilitating good decision-making and managing crises. How about the relevance of the latter today?

We have always provided information that our users requested, but now we have to go out and find what our users need to become good decision-makers. In many cases they just don't know that we can find this information. There is a famous quote to the effect that not knowing the answer is not the problem—the problem is thinking that you know the answer. It is up to us to find the information and provide the analysis for our users to make the best-informed decisions possible, and to make sure that management is aware of this fact.

Evaluating Your ROI

Granted, it can all seem so confusing when we are told to get back to basics, to do what we are good at doing, but also to be encouraged to be innovative and embrace new technologies. In practice these are not

dichotomies, because our basic mission and goals have not changed. What has changed are the tools we use, the needs of our users, and our user base. Because of these three changes we are providing services for, and having an impact on, a much wider and more diverse group of individuals within our organization (or at least we should be).

Historically, measurements were of outputs, but they now need to be based on outcome evaluations. In the March issue of *Information Outlook*, the authors of "Creating and Measuring Value in a Corporate Library" wrote about the form they used for evaluation purposes. You have to give them full marks for the form's name, which is Value Assessment of Library Use Efficiency (VALUE). Finding ways of evaluating your services and their return on investment (ROI) is difficult in our profession, but it is so crucial that I recommend you read any and all articles on the subject to find a system that might work for you.

This is the last column I will write for *Information Outlook*, and over the past 10 years or so I am sure that I have repeated myself on numerous occasions. If it is worth saying it is worth repeating, or so I'm told. Before I drafted this column I took a look at the titles of my previous columns and wondered what on earth I wrote about for columns titled "Curiosity killed the cat, but will keep you alive," "One small step for Cinderella," and "Federer v. Italy." If you want to find out, the columns are online at www.sla.org/content/resources/inforesour/kexcorner.cfm.

Over and out. **SLA**



JOHN R. LATHAM retired as the director of the SLA Information Center in July.

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and seminars, including new
classes on copyright,
see www.sla.org/clicku.

OTHER EVENTS

AUGUST

8-11
**2nd International Conference on
Computer Science and Information
Technology**
Beijing, China
www.iccsit.org/

23-25
Salford Data Mining Conference 2009
Salford Systems
San Diego, Calif., USA
<http://salforddatamining.com/>

23-27
IFLA 2009
World Library and Information
Congress
Milan, Italy
www.ifla.org/iv/ifla75/index.htm

24-28
**35th International Conference
on Very Large Data Bases**
Lyon, France
www.vldb2009.org/

31-1 Sept.
Kaleidoscope 2009
International Telecommunication
Union
Mar del Plata, Argentina
www.itu.int/ITU-T/uni/kaleidoscope/2009/

SEPTEMBER

9-10
Gov 2.0 Summit
O'Reilly Media and TechWeb
Washington, D.C., U.S.A.
www.gov2summit.com

13-15
ASIDIC Fall 2009 Meeting
Association of Information and
Dissemination Centers
Washington, D.C., U.S.A.

15-16
Pharma CI Conference and Exhibition
Parsippany, N.J., U.S.A.
www.pharmaciconference.com/

15-18
**ALIA 2009 National Library and
Information Technicians Conference**
Australian Library and Information
Association
Adelaide, Australia
<http://conferences.alia.org.au/libtec2009/>

OCTOBER

1-2
**Sixth International Conference on
Intellectual Capital, Knowledge
Management and Organizational Learning**
McGill University
Montreal, Canada
[www.academic-conferences.org/icickm/](http://www.academic-conferences.org/icickm/icickm2009/icickm09-home.htm)
icickm2009/icickm09-home.htm

5-7
**Tenth International Conference on Web
Information Systems Engineering**
Poznan, Poland
<http://wise2009.ue.poznan.pl/>

5-8
**International Conference on
Academic Libraries**
University of Delhi
Delhi, India
<http://library.du.ac.in/ocs/index.php/ical/index>

7-9
**CENTERIS 2009: Conference on
ENTERprise Information Systems**
Polytechnic Institute of Cávado and
Ave and the University of Trás-os-
Montes e Alto Douro
Ofir, Portugal
<http://centeris.eiswatch.org/>

12-14
LIANZA Conference 2009
Library and Information Association
of New Zealand Aotearoa
Christchurch, New Zealand
www.lianza.org.nz/events/conference2009/

12-16
**International Conference on Dublin
Core and Metadata Applications**
Dublin Core Metadata Initiative
Seoul, Korea
www.dc2009.kr/

14-16
**14th International Symposium for Health
Information Management Research**
Kalmar, Sweden
<http://dagda.shf.ac.uk/ishimr09/index.html>

15-16
**Internet Librarian International
Information Today**
London, U.K.
www.internet-librarian.com/index.php

15-16
People in the Information Profession
CAVAL
Melbourne, Australia
www.caval.edu.au/hrconference.html

16-18
**Digital Labour:
Workers, Authors, Citizens**
Digital Labour Group, University of
Western Ontario
London, Ontario, Canada

13 - 15 JUNE 2010

SLA Annual Conference
New Orleans, Louisiana

www.sla.org/neworleans2010

20-22
**International Conference on the
Knowledge Economy**
South African National Centre for
Informatics, Knowledge Management
and Knowledge Economy
Sandton, South Africa
www.aceconferences.co.za/icke_2009_home.htm

26-28
**Internet Librarian
Information Today**
Monterey, Calif., U.S.A.
www.infotoday.com/il2009/

27-30
**International ACM Conference on
Management of Emergent Digital
EcoSystems**
Lyon, France
<http://sigappfr.acm.org/MEDES/09/>

NOVEMBER

4-6
**European Competitive Intelligence
Summit**
Society of Competitive Intelligence
Professionals
Amsterdam, The Netherlands
www.scip.org/content.cfm?itemnumber=6968

ADVERTISING INDEX

American Chemical Society 4
Annual Reviews C2
Dialog. C4
getAbstract 17
Morningstar 27
Optical Society of America C3
Powell's Technical Books 43

SLA PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

Career Center 20
Click U Webinars 44
eVote 2010 8
Information Outlook Online 10
Member Benefits 46
SLA 2010 2
SLA at 100 Book 44

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